The

No. 336 (New Series), Vol. 7. August 27, 1938

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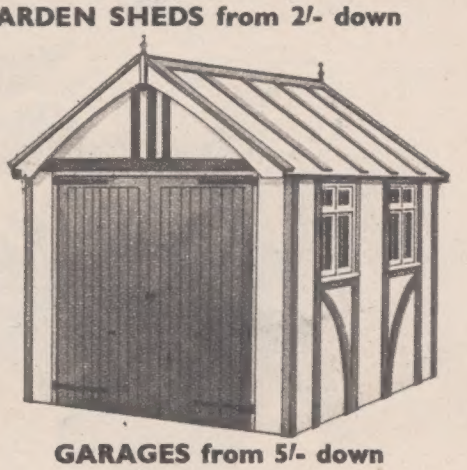

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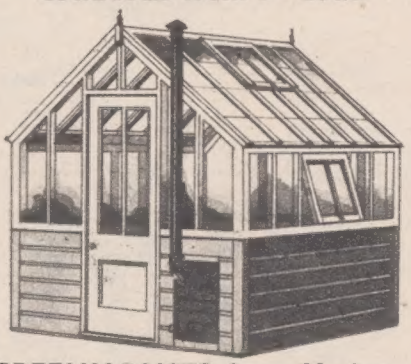

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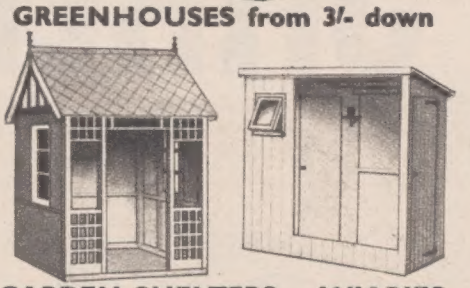

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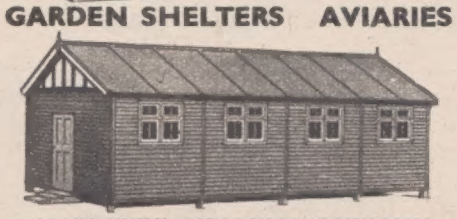

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The PASSING SHOW
No. 336 (New Series) Vol. 7. AUGUST 27, 1938

CHALLENGE TO THE INEVITABLE

"Put me down!" she cried. "What——! Hardly!" grunted Larry. "Ever hear of a hostage? You're one right now!"

Larry Bowden found that it was easier to overcome nature's barriers than man's prejudices. But it was not until a woman added her challenge that the fight grew really fierce

BY SEWELL PEASLEE WRIGHT

ILLUSTRATED BY LANCE CATTERMOLE

LARRY was asking for trouble, and he knew it.

Old Thorkil Nielsen had been absolute monarch of the Assin-Nebah country and every soul in it, for nearly half a century. He had been the first white man to build a camp in that vast arrow-head of country which lay, with its point symbolically toward the north, between the converging Assin-Nebah and Keewasin rivers.

To the south was a vast stretch of impassable muskeg, which swung northward along the western side of the triangular domain of Thorkil Nielsen, and was drained by the sluggish, meandering, brown current of the Keewasin River. The eastern boundary was the turbulent Assin-Nebah River, a perilous highway broken by nearly a score of portages—most of them long portages.

And Nielsen, if the tales were true, was a proper man to rule over such a wild and isolated country. Six feet four he was and with the strength of two men. He could snap an axe handle across his knee as easily as an ordinary man might break a dry twig to kindle his evening fire. Once—oh, there were many legends about Thorkil Nielsen—the Great Company had sent a man to the Assin-Nebah country to see if it would be profitable to establish a post there. The man was no coward, but Nielsen, the story ran, had pointed out many dangers peculiar to his country and the H.B. man had returned with the verdict that it would not pay to establish a post there.

There were legends about Petra Nielsen, also. She was the daughter of Thorkil; slender and graceful as one of her native birches, with hair the colour of wild honey and eyes blue as a northern lake. And as imperious as a bolt of lightning.

Some few men had paid court to Petra, but she had laughed at them and challenged them to a dog-race, or a passage through the rapids . . . and beaten them.

Yes, Larry Bowden was asking for trouble and he knew it—but Larry had asked for trouble before. Not because he liked to, but because he had to; the north country is not a generous mistress and she bestows her favours only upon men who do not turn back easily.

Everything considered, Larry, so far, had broken better than even. He had sold his claim at Red Lake for less than it was worth, but enough to buy an airplane and a pilot's training. Flying in prospectors and supplies had been profitable. Outfitting hunters and fishermen—"sports" was the north country word for them—was something he had taken up only two years before and had made quite a success of the work.

Men liked Larry. There was something sturdy and dependable about him that made city-bred men feel at ease in the bush. They liked the faint, humorous twinkle in his dark eyes, and they envied the healthy brown of his skin. Most of all, perhaps, they respected the size and the weight of the load he could pack across a portage without even breathing hard at the far end. Even his guides would shake their heads when they saw Larry lean against his tump-line; "He ees lazy, that wan," old Joe Boilleau claimed. "He mak' wan trip do the work of two!"

And now Larry had come hurtling out of the sky to challenge the legendary supremacy of Thorkil Nielsen. Larry had laughed at many of the stories he had heard, but one report at least he knew now was true: standing face to face with Petra Nielsen, he found her breathtakingly beautiful.

She had come racing across the lake as he slanted the ship earthward in a long glide and set it down before the little cluster of buildings which comprised Nielsen's trading post. Petra Nielsen stood now beside the lead dog of her panting string of huskies, straight and slender and graceful in her breeches and parka of green wool. A deep fringe of fox fur framed her face; on her feet she wore soft pacs of moose-hide, bleached white, and laced with scarlet thongs, to match the scarlet-fringed white sash about her waist.

"You're Petra Nielsen," Larry said. "Right?"

She nodded silently, her blue eyes curious, almost unfriendly.

"I'm Larry Bowden. I've come to have a little talk with your father. I imagine he's around, somewhere?"

"Yes. May I ask the nature of your business with him?"

Something in the crisp, imperious voice irritated Larry. The Nielsen family might as well start immediately to learn that Larry Bowden was not afraid of them.

"Surely" he said, and stopped. He looked round casually, waiting for the significance of that single word to sink in. It didn't take long.

"I think," she said quietly, "that you'd better go. I'm sure my father wouldn't be interested

(*please turn over*)

in whatever you may have to say to him."

"Strange, isn't it, how different opinions can be? I'm just positive he will be interested in what I'm going to tell him. Very much interested, as a matter of fact. Wouldn't it be a good idea, perhaps, to let him judge for himself?"

Unexpectedly, Petra smiled—but it wasn't a pleasant smile. It was a smile which made Larry wish he hadn't crossed swords quite so definitely with Thorkil Nielsen's daughter.

"Pardon my apparent lack of hospitality," she said. "Do come in."

She led the way to the largest of the buildings and opened the door. Thorkil Nielsen—there was no mistaking him—was standing by the window which faced the lake; undoubtedly he had been watching through a hole scratched in the thick frost. He turned his head slowly as Larry entered, but made no other move.

"Dad," Petra said, "this is Larry Bowden."

Larry was conscious of a certain sense of impact as he met the older man's gaze. It was easy enough to understand, now, the stories he had heard of Thorkil Nielsen.

Physically, he was a giant, but the sense of power the man radiated was not in his bulk of bone and muscle. There was dominance in the very carriage of his head and something almost majestic in his mane of white hair and his straight, grim mouth.

But his eyes were the truest index to the man. Larry had never seen eyes quite that intense shade of blue; had never looked into eyes which made such a demand for attention and respect. *Power* . . . that was the word for the quality which Thorkil Nielsen seemed to radiate.

"Bowden," he said and his voice seemed to come rumbling from the depth of his massive chest. "Something we can do for you?"

"Yes—if you will. I need two or three good men; I thought you might put me in touch with them. Men who know how to use an axe."

Nielsen stared at him, his grey brows slowly crawling toward the straight sharp cleft which divided them.

"What for, Bowden?"

Larry drew out his pipe and filled it. He felt the need to do something more than to stand uncomfortably there and face this unfriendly pair. The familiar action gave him a certain assurance.

"Perhaps I'd better start at the beginning," he said, slowly. "I have an airplane. I make my living with it, taking in prospectors, freighting in supplies, taking sports to virgin hunting and fishing territory. The country along the tracks is pretty well washed up; too easy to get into.

"This territory has never been tapped. There's plenty of game here. I'm planning on building a camp to accommodate a party of six or eight, and their guides. I can fly them in——"

"No," Thorkil Nielsen said. "We don't want them."

"But there won't be many of them; there will be accommodation for only a few. The game they take will never be missed. Their guides will see to it that they behave themselves and do no damage. We'll buy our supplies from you and——"

"No," Nielsen interrupted again. This time he shook his head and started to walk away, as though to emphasise the utter finality of the single word.

"Just a moment!" snapped Larry. Thorkil Nielsen paused and looked at Larry with a sort of mild surprise. "I'd like to use men from this country to build my camp, instead of bringing them in. I'd like to buy my supplies from you, for the same reason. I'd like to have your co-operation, too. But—I'm building the camp, anyway, Nielsen."

Larry heard the girl draw in her breath sharply. Nielsen was staring as though he could not believe the evidence of his own ears.

"I said *no*," Nielsen pronounced slowly. "When I say no, Bowden, that means no, in this country. Go somewhere else to build your camp; I won't have it here."

Larry applied a match to the tobacco in his pipe and moved toward the door.

"Sorry you feel that way about it," he said. "It's Government land, you know, and I'm perfectly within my rights. The camp will be located on the big point which runs out from the east end of Paskasagun Lake. I looked it over from the air, coming in, and it seems like an ideal spot. I'll bring in my own supplies and my own men. We'll start getting out logs immediately.

"If you change your mind, you might send word to me there."

He waited a moment for Thorkil Nielsen's response. There was none. The old man simply stood there, staring, the cleft between his brows sharper and deeper than ever.

"Good afternoon!" said Larry, glancing at Petra.

"You're very, very foolish," she said, quietly.

Larry shrugged and lifted the latch. As he walked down to the lake he heard Thorkil Nielsen's voice, like the rumble of a storm sweeping through the bush, but he could not make out the words.

Within a week, Larry and a crew of three men were busy getting out logs.

It was hard work, and cold work, but they were used to both. The log pile beside the clearing they had made grew daily.

Larry was skidding a log into place on the second pile when he saw a bit of brilliant green behind a distant clump of willows. Chuckling, he rolled the log into place and walked briskly away until he knew he was out of sight. Then he ran to his tent, secured his snow-shoes, and circled swiftly through the bush until he came up behind the watching figure.

"Why, hello!" he called to Petra. "Why don't you come over and see how well we're getting along?"

She swung around, startled.

"I can see very well from here," she said, regaining her composure sufficiently to make her voice cool and indifferent.

"So you can," said Larry, glancing toward the clearing. "You came to see if we were really going ahead with our plans?"

Petra's chin went up in a flash.

"And if I did? This is our country."

"But, of course, Government land?"

"You recognise no rights except legal ones?"

"Surely. That's why I tried to put all this on a friendly basis. You—and your father—refused to recognise my rights."

"Your rights?" Petra cried, passionately. "What rights have you here? You're an outsider, come to exploit our country for your personal gain; bringing in rich men to kill for the fun of killing, so that you can profit. And you say you have a right to do those things!"

"You make it sound very terrible. It isn't, at all. These rich men you talk about aren't such bad chaps at all; those who will come here are real sportsmen, not head-hunters. The kind you're talking about go for the luxurious steam-heated, electric-lighted lodges close to the steel."

"Perhaps. Anyway, they're not coming. I told you that you were very foolish and you are. Can't you see you're just wasting time and money over there?"

"No. No, I can't see it. I think we're coming along very well. Don't you?"

"You're getting out a lot of logs. But suppose . . . suppose lightning should hit them?"

"At this time of year?"

"Things like that happen up here, sometimes."

"Trained lightning?" Larry smiled and shook his head.

"I'm sorry you won't listen to reason," Petra said, angrily. "You're a bigger fool than I thought you were!"

She flipped her webs around and went striding off into the bush. After a time, Larry heard her dogs yapping a welcome. Very slowly, very

The black bearded man dropped into the snow like a bundle of old clothes. It wasn't sporting, swinging on a man utterly off guard—but neither was four against one sporting. Larry had no regrets

thoughtfully, Larry picked his way back to the clearing.

That same night he was awakened by the shouting of his men, and opened his eyes to find a wild red light flickering through the canvas. Thorkil Nielsen had acted sooner than Larry had anticipated.

The men were frantically cursing and throwing snow on the crackling, seething towers of flame, but Larry called them off.

"No use," he said, bitterly. "They piled brush back of the logs, and soaked them with kerosene. Smell it? The smoke reeks of it. We can't possibly save them."

"Who done it?" one of the men asked angrily. "Nielsen?"

"Of course. But prove it!" Lightning, Thorkil Nielsen's daughter had called it. Well, the lightning had struck.

"We can go over there and tell him a few things, anyway. There's over a week's work going up in smoke. Any damned bush-rat who would do a thing like that——"

"I'll call on Nielsen in the morning," Larry said softly. "You fellows start getting out more logs."

As soon as it was light, Larry warmed up his ship. At the side of the clearing were two black, smouldering heaps of ashes where his logs had been. He was anxious to talk to Thorkil Nielsen about winter lightning.

Larry swooped down before Nielsen's post, and let the motor idle. Nielsen was just firing up for the day; he dropped in the last stick of birch and put the lid back in place with a rattle of iron on iron.

"Queer thing happened last night, Nielsen," Larry said, curtly. "Lightning struck the logs we've been getting out."

Something like a smile flickered for an instant along the straight line of Thorkil Nielsen's lips.

"This is a queer country, in some ways," he said in his rumbling voice. "Strangers . . . they just don't understand it."

"That's where you're mistaken, Nielsen. I know plenty about lightning. I was even warned about this, you know."

"Warned?"

"Your daughter said lightning might strike my logs."

Something stirred momentarily in the depths of the intense blue eyes. So the girl hadn't told the old man of her visit and her warning!

"And it did?"

"Yes, Nielsen, it did. Well, they say lightning never strikes twice in the same place. If it should hit our logs again, that would be unnatural, wouldn't it? Something . . . would have to be done about it."

Thorkil Nielsen took two slow steps forward. His head was thrust forward and his hands had become fists, slowly closing and unclosing.

"Listen, Bowden," he said, carefully. "You're not building that camp. Don't be a fool, and don't make threats. This is *my* country. Every man in it is my man. Now—get out!"

"I'm going," nodded Larry. "But you're mistaken about one thing: there are four of us here who are not your men. The camp is going up. And remember this: if you make your own laws up here, then we'll make ours, too. And . . . enforce them."

For reply, Nielsen flung open the door.

"Get out!" he thundered. "Before I break you in two!"

They worked like demons the next three days; then, supplies running low, Larry took off for the tracks early the fourth day. He returned, tail-heavy with his load of food and gasoline, shortly before noon the next day.

Even before he set down, Larry knew something was wrong. There were no fires sending up smoke; there were no men in sight.

He shouted as he swung out of the cabin, but only an echo came back to him. The fire where the men warmed themselves while working, had burned itself out. Inside their tent were three disordered sleeping-bags.

It wasn't hard to figure out. Nielsen, or his men, had made another raid. Only this time, they had come to take prisoners. Without men, Larry was helpless.

Clever, he thought bitterly. It had been hard to find the three men he had hired; this was the busy season in the bush country. It would be even harder, now, when he told what had happened to the others.

Of course, he could invoke the law. A Red Coat, or a Provincial, would bring old Nielsen around in no time.

But Larry wasn't going outside for new men, and he wasn't going to ask the law to help. This was his fight and the men who were prisoners were his men. He had made that boast to Thorkil Nielsen only a few days before. But even as he decided, Larry knew uncomfortably that Nielsen had planned on just this decision.

So far, Nielsen had been right. But Larry's next step must be an unexpected one. He must move swiftly; he must do something for which Nielsen was unprepared. But what?

If he went directly to Nielsen and demanded that his prisoners be released, the old tyrant would only laugh at him. Unless . . . unless he had a weapon to hold over Nielsen's head. A whip to crack. . . .

Smiling grimly, Larry went back to his ship. Hastily, he cached most of the supplies he had brought in. He struck one of the tents; rolled it up hastily together with a sleeping-bag. This went in the ship, together with the stove and necessary pipe. Larry was whistling as he worked; whistling softly, his mind busy with his plans.

He took off, studying the country below as he gained altitude. It did not take him long to find what he sought; a lake just large enough to land on, surrounded by thickly wooded country and only a few miles away.

When his work was finished he slid roaring toward the heavens, climbing until the lakes were only stretches of pure white, connected by little crooked white threads which ran between the bristling black masses which were the bush. Larry felt in his blood the exaltation which always came when he was high

(*please turn over*)

above the world, and he was glad; it would help him to do the thing he had planned to do.

He spiralled down over the trading post of Thorkil Nielsen, and left the ship pointed into the wind, prop ticking over, at the very foot of the path which led from the trading room to the lake.

Nielsen met him at the door. There was a look of quiet amusement in his blue eyes.

"You are back?"

"Yes." Larry glanced around the room. "I'd like to have your daughter hear what I have to say. Will you call her, please?"

Nielsen hesitated. Then he shrugged; a kingly gesture of condescension.

"If she cares to come, very well. Will you wait?"

"Gladly."

Nielsen stalked to the back of the room, and opened the rear door. A few yards away stood the cabin which was the Nielsen home. Larry had noticed that opening before—and he had noticed the heavy bar of hardwood which, pivoted in the centre of the massive door, could be swung to engage two catches of hand-wrought iron, one on each side of the doorway. Upon that bar, and upon the deeply drifted snow outside, depended the success of Larry's plan.

Quickly, exactly as he had mentally rehearsed the action a dozen times, Larry unlatched the front door; then he crossed the room and stood with his ear pressed against the heavy slabs of the door Nielsen had just closed behind him. Larry's heart was thumping madly, and he could not control the long, deep breaths his lungs demanded, when at last he heard the whine of packed snow under approaching feet. Nielsen was talking, softly for him, but the rumble of his voice came clearly through the planking. Petra, then, was with him!

Larry stood back from the door a few feet, where he would be shielded from their view when it was opened. He stood there, his eyes fixed on the heavy bar; poised for that single instant of action which would decide everything.

The latch clicked, and a shaft of light shot into the room. As Petra took her first step inside, Larry reached out and drew her swiftly into the room. At the same instant, he threw his weight against the door, and swung the bar into place.

There was a sound of a heavy body striking the packed snow outside, and Nielsen's voice lifted in a roar of anger.

But already Larry had swept Petra off her feet, into his arms, and was running with her.

"Put me down!" she cried. "What——"

"Hardly!" grunted Larry, kicking open the front door. "Ever hear of a hostage? You're one right now!"

Behind him, Nielsen shouted incoherent threats as he ploughed through the deep, soft drifts. In Larry's arms Petra fought like a fish in a trap, but silently now.

Larry slid her into the cabin of the plane as unceremoniously as though she had been a duffle bag, and swung in after her, behind the controls. Nielsen was clear of the drifts now and was running down the path, his clothing powdered with snow from the waist down.

Larry opened the throttle. The ship started to move, slowly and heavily at first, and then with a fine, swift buoyancy. Larry eased back on the stick and climbed straight into the wind. A thousand feet up, he turned and glanced at Petra.

She was watching him intently and the look in her eyes was not wholly fear or hatred or anger. There was something else there . . . Larry could not guess what.

"Your first time up?" he said, above the thunder of the motor. "How do you like it?"

"I hate you," she said.

Larry showed her the tent he had set up on the little lake, the sleeping-bag, the supplies.

"So long as you stay right here, you'll be perfectly comfortable," he commented. "But you haven't heavy clothing, nor snowshoes, so you'd better stick close to your tent."

"Just how long do you expect to keep me prisoner?" She wouldn't even glance at the provisions Larry had made for her comfort.

"Just so long as your father keeps my men prisoners," Larry retorted. He wondered whether Petra would pretend surprise, or deny her father had captured Larry's men. She didn't.

"That's likely to be a long time," she said, slowly. "My father is a very stubborn man, used to having his own way. I can't remember when anyone has dared cross him."

"I'm sorry that I had to be the one to do it, but it was inevitable. You understand that, surely. This is a big country—but men are pushing northward from the steel in every direction. The frontier has moved on, beyond you—don't you see that's true?"

"My father doesn't. He's old, and he's ruled this country with an iron hand all these years. I'm thinking of him."

"I tried to be friends. I wanted to be friends . . . especially after I met you." Larry hadn't intended to say that; he was sorry he did.

"You have a unique way of showing your regard," Petra said, coldly.

Larry shrugged and strode back to the plane. If she wouldn't be friendly, she wouldn't, and that was all there was to it. If she were too narrow-minded to see his side, to realise that he had to fight fire with fire and retaliate in kind, that he was just one man against a whole country, and had to use whatever weapons he could lay hands upon, then—well, she could stay there and keep her wilful little chin tilted skyward.

Back at the clearing where some day his camp would stand, Larry waited the visit he knew would come. This time he was not going to Nielsen. Larry held the whip hand, and he knew it.

He had just finished his noonday tea when Thorkil Nielsen arrived. There were four men with him; four husky men who watched Larry silently, with curious, unfriendly eyes. They had two teams of dogs with them.

"Where's Petra, Bowden? I want her." Nielsen's voice was not his accustomed bellow, now. It was soft, almost gentle. A sound like snow driven over frozen crust by the north wind. The menace of that voice was unmistakable.

"Where are my men?" Larry countered. "I want them, too. I've a camp to build here."

"We can talk about that after I have Petra back, safe."

"I'm afraid not. You might not care to listen . . . then."

"I've brought some friends with me, Bowden. They're not exactly gentle souls."

"I understand that. But—your daughter is all alone. She has food for a few days only. Only one thing in the world will lead you to her: your word that my men will be released immediately."

Thorkil Nielsen looked beyond Larry, his gaze fixed thoughtfully on the distant horizon.

"You drive a hard bargain," he said, in a different tone of voice.

"Because you make me."

Nielsen turned to the men he had brought with him and spoke to them briefly in a language Larry did not understand. The men nodded and drove swiftly away.

"Let us understand each other fully," proposed Nielsen, sitting down inside the tent and lighting his pipe. "You will bring Petra back and I am to return your men. Is that the bargain?"

"Exactly."

"But I am not bound in any other way—regarding my future actions?"

"No. We can take care of ourselves I think, after this."

"And Petra will be returned at once; to-day?"

"As soon as you give me your word that my men will be returned, uninjured, not later than to-morrow."

"You'll accept my word for that?"

"Certainly." Larry was rapidly becoming impatient with the constant barrage of questions. Nielsen haggled and bickered. He asked the same questions over, and argued about the answers. He quibbled about trifles. He——

"What's the idea of all this stalling?" Larry demanded at last. "I'm tired of talking. Either you will, or you won't. What's the answer?"

Larry got up and dodged out of the tent, suddenly suspicious! Perhaps the old fox had ordered his men to come back and disable the plane, or——

Then Larry saw the reason why Nielsen had quibbled away the last half hour. To the east, a dark, thin column of smoke was mounting to the heavens. As Larry had talked to Nielsen upon his arrival, Nielsen had been facing that part of the horizon, and he had known that only one person could be sending up that mute appeal for help. He had sent his men toward the fire, to rescue Petra, and kept Larry here until the men could effect the rescue.

Thorkil Nielsen followed Larry. He was smiling faintly, and there was triumphant mockery in his ice-blue eyes.

"I'm almost sorry, Bowden," he said, in his booming voice. "You made a good try. A game try. Only . . . Petra was too clever for you."

Larry brushed by him without a word, and hastily started packing. There was just a chance he could get to Petra's camp before Nielsen's men reached her. If he did, he would take her elsewhere—and stay with her, to make sure she did no more signalling.

He wouldn't need much. He would take the tent and the supplies she had; there were blankets and provisions in the plane. They were always there; it was a good idea to have at least a few necessities in case of a forced landing in the bush country. Working frantically, Larry flung together a small pack of the things he would need, and trotted out to the ship.

Nielsen had gone. Larry was glad of that; it had been hard to face the mocking light in the older man's eyes.

Petra was standing beside her fire, throwing green wood on the blaze when Larry arrived. And she was alone.

"Smart trick," Larry said, grimly. "But I beat them. Now, unless you want to be carried, get——"

The four men came tearing their way through the bush, then, their dogs yelping behind them, sensing excitement.

"Ho!" cried one of them, a black-bearded man in a red mackinaw. "Come, Miss Petra. We take care of this wan."

Larry knew he had to think fast and straight. Four against one—it was impossible. His only chance lay in surprising the enemy.

"Now just wait a moment," he said amiably enough, approaching the four carelessly. "Let's talk this thing over. It's just possible——"

He interrupted himself with a blow to the jaw which spun the black-bearded man around and dropped him into the snow like a bundle of old clothes. It wasn't sporting, swinging on a man utterly off guard—but neither was four against one sporting. Larry had no regrets.

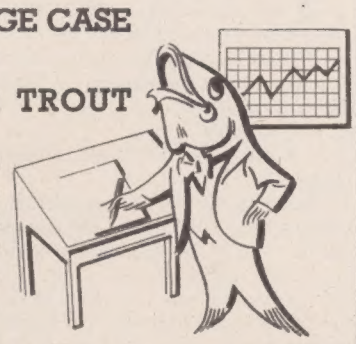
With a howl the tallest of the remaining three leaped forward, kicking instead of using his fists. But Larry understood the peculiarly rough-and-ready style of fighting which is the lumberjack's

(*please turn to page* 32)

WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE

To be found sadly wanting—this is the position in which Miss Dido Rallory, a spoiled and pampered millionairess, finds herself. The experience does her a lot of good, however. A rattling good yarn by JAMES FRANCIS DWYER about a coral island, a brutal castaway and the fop who finds his manhood again.

THE STRANGE CASE OF SYLVESTER TROUT



Simple enough when an advertisement copy - writer buys a penny-worth of toffee to test the merits of the product he has to sell—but when he applies the same principle to expensive motor-cars and Mediterranean cruises his employer has something to say. This briefly outlines ROBERT T. COLWELL'S amusing yarn.

NEXT WEEK

NEW D.G's £20 DAY'S WORK

A SECRET signal on a lift bell announces the arrival of the B.B.C's Director-General at Broadcasting House every morning. It is given by the blue uniformed commissionaire, who, as he parades up and down outside the B.B.C. headquarters, sights his chief's car swiftly approaching down Portland Place. The lift man, receiving the special signal, drops from wherever he may be among the eight floors of the great building, to wait, ready to take the Director-General up to his third floor office.

So it was every morning during Sir John Reith's direction of the B.B.C., and so will it be with Frederick Ogilvie, the professor from Belfast who starts his duties as Sir John's successor in October at a salary of £7,500 a year—more than £20 every day.

The "D-G," as the B.B.C. staff from governors to page-boys call their chief, occupies a room in the "prow" of ship-like Broadcasting House, directly overlooking the end of Regent Street. Two ante-rooms open out from the "D.G.'s," and, as he settles himself at his desk, from one of them comes his chief secretary for the orders of the day, bringing from his bulky morning post-bag those letters which it is essential for him to attend to personally.

That post-bag may contain a letter from the Prime Minister alongside one from a labourer complaining about over-long symphony concerts. Every type of human being writes to the B.B.C. Director-General. In the ante-room two assistant secretaries sort these letters.

The four controllers, between whom Sir John Reith divided up the detailed work of organisation in the B.B.C., meet the "D.G." as and when their business requires. Pressing one of a row of buttons on his desk, the "D.G." sets off a buzzer in the Programme Controller's office a few doors away on the same floor. Captain Cecil Graves, hearing the buzzer, immediately leaves his work and presents himself to his chief.

Graves, tall, aristocratic, with greying hair, the nephew of Viscount Grey and inheritor of the great Fallodon estates, offers his opinions on the Advisory Council's report, and between them the "D.G." and Programme Controller review matters raised in it.

At the same time, Mr. Graves may be asked about some other pending matter of high policy regarding programmes—perhaps one of the difficult problems frequently arising over the "lightening" of Sunday broadcasting. This discussion probably calls for the opinion of the Religious Director, who casts a supervisory eye over every item of the Sunday programme. This official is called in, and the discussion is interrupted only by a trim, uniformed waitress from the B.B.C. restaurant, bringing in morning coffee for the "D.G." and his "guests."

As the Religious Director leaves the room, the Programme Controller is still detained, for the "D.G." wishes to clear up a few questions as to the financial arrangements made for programmes in the next quarter year. There may be a move to give the Variety department a little more of the B.B.C.'s precious licence revenue, while another department may be in for a "cut." Working a quarter ahead all the time, the "D.G." is rarely embroiled in matters affecting current programmes.

With the return of Mr. Graves to his own office, the "D.G.'s" secretary turns up the next item in his diary. "To meet C. E. re. East Anglia." This cryptic note is a reminder that the Controller of Engineering has some important plans afoot for improving broadcasting conditions in East Anglia.

Sir Noel Ashbridge, short, stocky Engineering Controller is called in. He enters smoking his inevitable pipe. His plans, based on a recent expedition of B.B.C. engineers into East Anglia, where they tested reception of B.B.C. stations, may suggest the building of a relay transmitter in that area. The "D.G." may say that the engineers' case is not strong enough to merit his laying it before the governors, for the plan is a costly one. So away goes the Controller of Engineering, and back go his men to East Anglia to find more telling evidence in order to gain their point.

Lunch time . . . and the 2,000-odd London B.B.C. staff rapidly fill up the modernistic steel and glass tables in their smart, green and black restaurants. Some may go outside to west end haunts, and it might be thought that the "D.G." would be one of these. But Sir John Reith made it his business to lunch in his staff's restaurant occasionally, and Mr. Ogilvie may hold the same principle.

High policy, not programme details, will be Professor Frederick Ogilvie's worry. . . . One the most responsible jobs in the British Empire will make it hard for him to keep up his cinema-going, his picture-painting, his full, family life. . . . "He may be master of Broadcasting House—but it can so easily become his master"

BY KENNETH BAILY

It will be difficult, however, for him to find the time, for the B.B.C. chief has many luncheon commitments outside the white walls of Broadcasting House. The nation's leaders, from politicians to social welfare workers, regard the B.B.C. as a power whereby they may reach the people.

Back in his room, the "D.G." finds another problem awaiting him—one which is going to give him much worry. Mr. Gerald Cock, Director of Television, has an appointment with him. Television, the amazing, speedily-growing, new medium, scraping an existence out of the already over-taxed coffers of the B.B.C., bristles with difficulties, and, by his handling of them, a B.B.C. Director-General may well shape the destiny of radio as well as his own.

By this time it begins to look as though the "D.G.'s" diary for the day is over-crowded, and that he will not keep his work up to schedule. Sir Stephen Tallents, Public Relations Controller, is, within half an hour, to receive a deputation from one of those very zealous organisations which not infrequently consider some B.B.C. broadcast to have been against the interests of the people. Sir Stephen wishes to have a word with the "D.G." before meeting these gentlemen with a grouse.

A young man, newly appointed to a fairly high executive job in the B.B.C., is waiting in the ante-room for the interview with the "D.G." which will officially welcome him to the Corporation. It is during such rushes that the "D.G.'s" carefully-selected and super-efficient secretaries becomes his "second line of defence."

One of these young ladies is given instructions for Sir Stephen Tallents. Another is told to serve the waiting young man in the ante-room with tea. Thus, can the "D.G." find a moment to slip down to the Council Chamber where a group of departmental heads are being served by a couple of waitresses with "Indian or China."

In this long, panelled hall, with its triple range of half-circle tables, the chief of the B.B.C. keeps in daily touch with the men who are actually on the job of running the programmes. For a moment he may chat with dark, bearded Val Gielgud, Drama Director; the humorous, husky-voiced Variety Director, John Watt, will be consulted a moment; the talk turns to music as the "D.G." meets the genial Sir Adrian Boult. . . .

Not only are the programme directors present, but, also directors of administrative departments, and each and all have this daily chance of getting to know their chief more intimately than would otherwise be possible in so large an organisation.

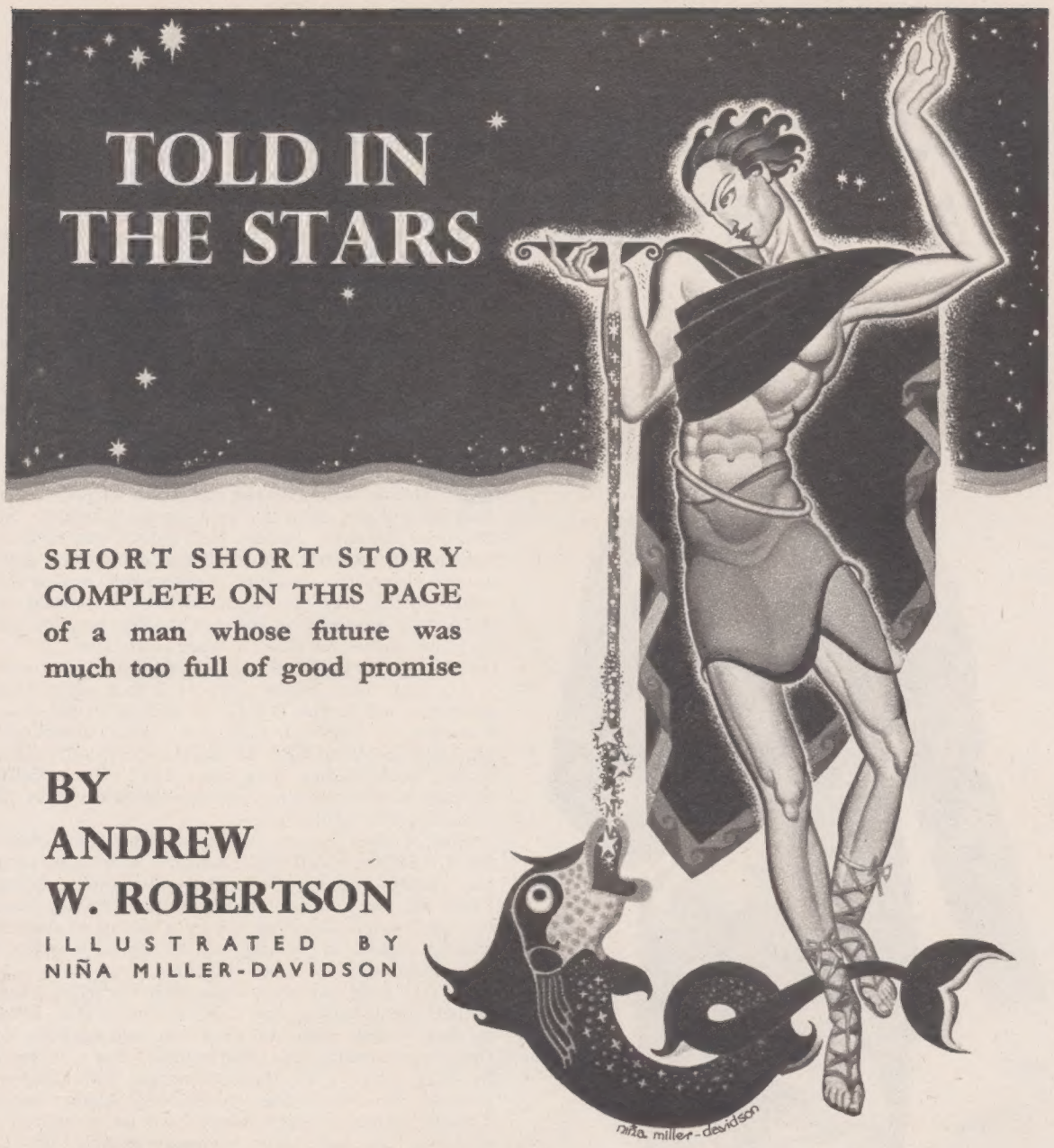
Refreshed as to what his departmental directors are doing, the "D.G." returns to his room to meet the newly appointed young official. They talk for a few minutes about the new work before this latest recruit to an organisation which is still growing at the rate of fifty or so appointments a year. As well as receiving these lucky young men, selected for him by a Staff Establishment Board, the "D.G." meets every tried and trusted member of his staff on their completion of ten years' service with the Corporation.

It is past five o'clock, and in the 600 offices around the "D.G.'s" the staff are preparing to go home. A secretary presents him with a few "memos," marked urgent, and requiring his sanctioning signature; there are a few letters to sign, too, and perhaps a telephone call to answer from someone who has waited all day to get a word with the busy radio chief. And then, as the three secretaries quietly put on their hats, pat their curls and wish their chief "Good night, sir!" the B.B.C. Director-General once again consults his diary—and probably finds his evening full of engagements.

There is a programme he wishes to hear; he may hear it in the studio, or go home and hear it. When he has heard it, he may pick up his telephone and have a few words with the producer responsible for it—words laudatory or otherwise. He may also have a dinner engagement with yet another Cabinet minister, bishop, author or scientist.

Such is the task the radio stations of Britain ask of the man chosen to be responsible for their daily management.

Mr. Ogilvie is a keen listener, a cinema-goer, an artist, a family man. . . . As "D.G." at the B.B.C. it is going to be hard for him to keep up his personal interests. He may be master of Broadcasting House—but it can so easily become his master.



TOLD IN THE STARS

SHORT SHORT STORY COMPLETE ON THIS PAGE of a man whose future was much too full of good promise

BY ANDREW W. ROBERTSON

ILLUSTRATED BY NIÑA MILLER-DAVIDSON

"THERE'S a letter for you," said Murphy, as he handed the breakfast tray to Nicholas Harris.

"Thanks," said Harris, "but what have you got for me this morning?"

"As you see, there's porridge with cream, boiled haddock, bacon and eggs, toast and tea," said Murphy.

All the time he was eating, Harris couldn't help wondering what was in his letter. Who could it be from? He noticed that the envelope had been re-addressed from his last place. Who was there to write to him at this hour? Perhaps it was just another tradesman after his bill—these people wouldn't leave anybody alone.

But Harris was determined not to let the contents of the letter spoil this very excellent breakfast. How the cooking had improved during the last few days. It was always the same when one had to leave. At first he didn't think he would ever get used to the food, but he was surprised how adaptable one gets.

While eating the toast he decided to open the letter and the first thing that struck him was the star-like letter heading. But he didn't waste too much time looking at it. The contents of the letter had gripped his attention, which was as follows:

"My Dear Mr. Harris,

"In reply to your recent inquiry I now enclose your five shilling horoscope reading. As this is only a simple one, I have, therefore, omitted all the astrological technical details and have concentrated upon the highlights of your future life.

"Indeed, if I may say so, Mr. Harris, you are a very fortunate person, according to my reading of your life to be. I would add that good futures are not very common among my many customers; in fact, mediocre ones seem to be the general average. Therefore, let me extend my heartiest congratulations.

"I regret the delay in replying to your letter, but the Post Office people tell me that your letter was mislaid and was only recently delivered to me.

"Again let me thank you for the opportunity of casting your horoscope.

"Yours very truly,

"A. ZODEK, Doctor and Professor of the Science of Astrology."

After reading this, Harris finished the toast and drained his cup of tea, which Murphy again filled.

Before turning to the enclosures Harris took out a cigarette and offered one to Murphy who said, "Thanks, but I don't smoke." Quickly he had a match ready for Harris to light his cigarette. With his lungs now full of smoke, Harris turned to the first enclosure and read:

"By your birth date, February 4th, you are an Aquarian, born under the sign of the water carrier, which is the eleventh sign of Zodiac. This is an ascendant sign which is the symbol of the coming race—the race of supermen.

"The main characteristics of Aquarians are originality, with a great distaste or complete indifference to convention. They are seekers of the truth and are often fanatically brave in pursuing it. The Aquarian seems to have the perfect crowd mind and tends to operate better in large or small groups than individually. In fact, the Aquarian seems to live and think in crowds.

"In love affairs the Aquarian is an idealist, being very impulsive and generous in love. Nothing seems too much for him to give to his beloved.

"Aquarians make good masters but bad workers. They are at their best in intellectual, scientific, or professional work. They often excel in the army or government service.

"Many cranks are found under this sign and you can accuse them of anything, but, possessing an abnormal amount of courage, they can well stand any kind of criticism.

"The Aquarian is always a modernist and is always in the vanguard of such new movements. . . ."

This was enough for Harris, and he quickly passed the sheet on to Murphy, who, after a quick glance, said, "It's no good to me, I was born in July."

Harris then turned his attention to the next page and said, "That's what I wanted," and quickly started reading it.

"Your early life to date has been hard and uninteresting. You seem to be in some serious trouble at the moment, but all that will soon—very soon—pass and you will start claiming your just reward from life."

Harris paused. "Well, that seems perfectly right," and continued with the next part of it.

"You are scientifically inclined. But you have, in the past, misused your knowledge. However, it is not too late, now. Hard work in a scientific direction will work wonders. Once you seemed to have thought of and worked on an invention.

"Well, the stars show that this invention will mark the turning point in your career. Propitious signs symbolise that this invention will also make your fortune. You will have many set-backs over it, but after much uphill work you finally surmount them. Be prepared for opposition against it, but your persuasive powers stand you in good stead and you will win over any opposition to your side.

"It will take you some time to have your invention patented. Even then you will have to be patient, for it will only develop slowly and then, when you appear to have given up hope, it will suddenly become the rage of the moment. This sudden turn of the tide in popular favour towards it will make your fortune.

"Having suffered so much from poverty in your early life you will take good care of the money earned from it. In fact the money from this starts another phase of your future—that of a financier. You will use the money so earned for other business and industries and will, through this, end your career as a 'captain of industry.'

"As this seems to take care of your business career, next I will deal with your personal life:

"Your life sign shows that you are extremely healthy. But you require to take regular exercise to stay that way. Fortunately you appear to do this by force of habit. However, special care should be exercised in regard to the eyes, neck, feet and circulation systems. Off and on you will have many odd troubles but none of them ever develop into anything serious. There is every indication to show that you will live well beyond the Biblical period of 'three score and ten years.' You will have many trials and tribulations, but you possess enough spirit and 'guts' to survive them.

"Now for your love life. The stars point to the fact that you will marry in the month of June, a highly propitious month for you, but I will not reveal the year. Your married life will have many ups and downs, but on the whole happiness will dominate it. Again, the stars decree that you will have a family of four—two boys and two girls. And, strangely enough, all your offspring will become famous in widely separated spheres. Your family will be a great source of pride and satisfaction to you. Your wife will probably survive you but you will live to see the offspring of your family grow up.

"During the long course of your life you will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but neither you nor your family will see any war service. The economic conditions of the world will change, but somehow or other they do not seem to affect you. In a good many things the worst you ever have to fear are your thoughts. Somehow or other the worst never seems to happen to you, although it often gets pretty near.

"When the time comes for you to meet your Maker, the stars show that your end will be most peaceful. Every indication points to the fact that you will die quietly in your sleep."

At the bottom was written a note, "When I first cast this I thought it was a little too good, but on checking find it still stands as it is written. Therefore let me congratulate you on your future!

"A. Zodek, Doctor and Professor."

A smile spread over Harris's face as he handed the sheet to Murphy and lit another cigarette. Then he said, "What do you make of it, Murphy?"

"It reads all right," commented Murphy, "if that's what you mean; but that's all."

No sooner had Murphy made this remark than there came the sound of marching feet down the passage, and the governor, accompanied by the chief warder, the under-sheriff, the medical officer and the chaplain, entered and said, "Are you ready for your last walk, Harris?"

"Yes," replied the collarless Harris, with a scared haunted look in his deep set, cold, blue eyes, "I'm ready."

Then, with Murphy on one side and another warder on the other, Harris and the little cavalcade moved down the passage and out across the stone flagged prison yard, on a grey November morning, towards the little wooden shed where the gallows had been erected.

A band of warriors of the Orarimugudogi. The man in the centre is the tribe's magician who, taking a great liking to the author, offered Baldi his two daughters as wives if the latter would stay. Beside the magician sits the leader of the tribe

MY JUNGLE WIFE

I didn't know we were married till I missed the last of my tobacco . . . When I kissed her she scratched me . . . Her cooking was great . . . She was very proud when I tattooed her . . . She's now a well-to-do widow with an aluminium frying-pan . . . And this is the second article about my Brazilian adventures

BY MARIO BALDI

Bororo women use the leaves of the Burite palm to make carrier baskets. Below, some Orarimugudogi fishers. A section of the river is enclosed, nets placed on one bank and from the other bank natives drive the fish into the nets

WHEN peace was declared, I found the return to normal week-day routine almost unbearable after four years of excitement. So I decided to seek the excitement that normal Europe lacked, in Brazil; a country offering so many unexplored and many completely unknown districts.

Once in Brazil I had to set about learning the language and customs of the people. And I had to find work no matter what it might be. Farm-boy tractor-driver, telegraph-worker, wood-cutter, and —don't smile—gardener in a convent. I tried them all. And it was from this pensionate, with its 200 girls and nuns, that I made my first journey into the wilderness, equipped with the money I had saved and accompanied by a Swiss friend.

Somewhere in the Bolivian border we found a village full of naked, brown people, who were no less astonished than we were to suddenly come face to face with strangers. Despite the fact that we had no way of making ourselves understand each other, we all recited long speeches until we were accustomed to the sight of such strange creatures.

Then we constructed a hut of palm leaves of the same kind as those used by the natives. In this work we were helped by the women, who were greatly amused by the clumsiness of the strangers. Anyway, they soon forgot their shyness.

While the men were in the village the women folk were very quiet, but as soon as the men left on a hunting or fishing expedition the women congregated round our hut and chattered, pointing out

to each other those things about us and our belongings that seemed strange to them.

Later we joined the men on their hunting expeditions and in doing so got desperately tired, for they travelled at a speed that at times was almost impossible to follow.

At this time I became aware of a young girl who was making a habit of walking round and round our hut, smiling at me as I sat under my grass roof.

She was the daughter of an elderly man holding some sort of important position among the people of the village, a leader or magician of sorts.

One day both the father and daughter approached me and the old man started a long "speech," pointing alternately to me and the child, finally going to my belongings which were spread out in my hammock and pointing to a pile of rolled tobacco and then to the girl.

Leaving the girl with me he vanished quietly, taking with him the last of my precious tobacco. Stupidly gazing after him, I vaguely grasped the idea that the old man had been making some sort of deal with me and had left me in possession of his daughter, in exchange for my tobacco.

Letting the tobacco go, I turned to the maiden to discover whether she intended to stay. She showed no enthusiasm and, volubly telling the tale, pointed towards her own hut and finally started loosening the bindings of my mattress. This was only the preliminary move in a wholesale annexation of my goods.

(*please turn to page* 13)

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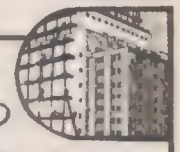

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Having efficiently collected all my wherewithals, she grasped my hand (possibly taking me as the last piece of furniture) and carried me off in triumph to the rancho of her parents. There all my luggage was neatly deposited. The mattress was neatly fixed by the girl and I realised that a comical marriage had been sealed and put in order in the eyes of the population.

Our marriage, in many ways, was ideal. Not understanding a word we said to each other, we were, of course, quite unable to argue. Otherwise the position turned out quite favourably; the girl cooked for me, not quite in my line but passably well, and if I shot anything on a hunting trip the girl carried it home.

But disaster came when I attempted to kiss my novel spouse. Screaming terribly she launched an attack upon me, scratching my face and hands and, for a long time, resisting all my attempts to quieten her. Much later, a long time after I had left the village, I learned that the Indians do not know what a "kiss" is. Apparently my bride imagined that I was about to bite her.

My most interesting experience was a festival in which the whole of the tribe took part. Everyone painted himself in a magnificent way and it fell to me to decorate "my wife."

I watched the others as they painted themselves and found that they covered their bodies with some sort of geometrical pattern. In my innocence I decided that my girl would stand out among the others if I painted her with black Gemipapo juice (from the Gemipapo tree.) So on her backbone I painted the shape of the trunk of a palm tree taking the design of the leaves over her shoulders and down to the elbows.

I used red Urucu juice to paint the shape of a Sun on her stomach allowing the rays to run snake-like over her hips.

The whole thing proved a revolutionary success and all the women clamoured to be decorated by me but I refused, for I wished my girl to be outstanding among the others.

As a sweet after a meat meal Indians seem particularly fond of a kind of insect larva similar to our cockroach larva, only larger. "My wife" offered me a portion roasted on a spit of bamboo splints and was somewhat annoyed when I strongly declined. Finally, a little bit upset, she ate them herself.

Eventually, my Swiss friend, who was living in a grass house of his own, caught malaria and we had to return to civilisation. If we had not done so, I do not know what would have happened to him. I left "my wife" aluminium dishes for cooking, woollen clothes, several shirts, several hundred fish-hooks and everything else that I could spare. I hope only that she found a worthy successor among the warriors of these Stone Age people. At least she was marvellously equipped and must have been as much in demand as an unmarried daughter of a Vanderbilt or a Rockefeller is in our own civilisation.

The sick man was carried to the river in a hammock slung over a bamboo pole supported on the shoulders of the Indians.

While crossing a brook all my films fell into the water and with them the greater part of our luggage and an iron hatchet and some bush-knives, which I intended giving away in exchange for a canoe for the journey down the river.

Still afraid that we might not race the fever that was imperilling the life of my friend, we succeeded in reaching a farm in wretched condition. And after many weeks my friend eventually recovered and we finally moved on to Rio de Janiero.

We had learned, among other things, how such an expedition should not be made and that we had an enormous lot to learn. Since that time I have lived many months among the Bororo Indians, the Caraja, the Javahê and the Tapira people and I understand better the thoughts of these sympathetic, primitive people. But I look back on the "first experiment" with only a melancholy and sorrowful smile.

It was in the district north of the Rio das Mortes in the centre of South America, probably the least known part of the continent, that Col. Fawcett, the well-known explorer, disappeared.

For this reason I pushed forward eagerly in the hope of obtaining pictures of the Cayamos, a people of whom very little is known with certainty. But I was never able to film them. In fact my expedition saw them only for a few minutes, on two tragic occasions.

In the district of the Mission they swooped down upon our oxen carriage, killed the leader by hitting him with a club, and left his sixteen-year-old wife dead on the track. They littered the contents of the cart, dried meat and salt, on the grass and took only the clothes of their victims, as booty.

Later, when our second unit, led by the Swiss Pater H. Fuchs and the Brazilian Pater P. Sacilotti, was searching with some Bororo natives for a suitable crossing place on the Rio das Mortes, it, also, was attacked and the two priests died heroically.

Pater H. Fuchs had been trying to make contact with the Cayamos for five years, because he wanted to convert them to Christianity, but, although he frequently saw traces he never found the Indians until the tragic morning when they fell upon him and his companions with clubs. A few days before he had, however, found a deserted village belonging to the tribe. And those who killed him were actually fishing in the river when his party approached bearing gifts.

The Cayamos still refuse to make contact, not only with the white man but also with neighbouring tribes. They carry this aversion so far that they even refuse to touch presents put down for them by Government officials.

For weapons they use clubs (cassettes) which they always leave behind with the bodies of the victims.

They can approach within eight feet of their victim before he becomes aware of their presence; and then, like a flash, they will fall upon the unfortunate traveller who has no chance at all of making resistance, or even of drawing a gun.

Their neighbours, the Bororos in the South and the Carajas in the East, are so afraid of the Cayamos that they told us, "If you gave us your own weight in rolled tobacco we should not accompany you to their country." And rolled tobacco is the most attractive bargaining material or "money" to these tribes.

Our most up-to-date weapons are perfectly useless against their mode of fighting. For various reasons we have come to the conclusion that the Cayamos were in touch with civilisation generations ago and their steadfast refusal to co-operate is based on some very bad experience.

Perhaps a feeling in their subconsciousness tells them that they will perish as soon as they come in contact with the "blessings of civilisation." In any case, I wish them a long and independent life, free from alcohol, exploitation and "culture."

Imagine a river about one and quarter miles in width, full of the most wonderful fish and rich in turtle, the meat of which is the greatest delicacy I have ever tasted.

The river is bordered by sand beaches (Praias) often of twelve miles long and a quarter of a mile wide with banks so white that to look at them hurts the eyes. They are like glistening snow.

This sand is so soft that I have never had a softer bed and beyond the banks stretches the mighty virgin forest rising in dark green slopes.

On the Praias live duck, geese and thousands of water-birds; deer, wild boar and other beasts come from the forest at morning and evening to drink at the shore.

Men hunt and fish.

And the women do the housework, make sleeping mats from straw. Sometimes a little plantation on the edge of the virgin forest will yield Mandioka, potatoes and sweet pine apples.

Everybody has time to rest in shady huts or by specially erected "shade walls".

The Carajas are inveterate smokers, from the baby to the grandmother, and I have seen a five-year-old child take the haricoco (a peculiarly shaped Caraja's pipe) from the mouth of his mother, have a few quick puffs and then run away to fight and play with his friends in the sand.

But these people, warriors and hunters by nature, are not always so peaceful. Sometimes they make long journeys to exchange produce with other tribes and some years ago they found a peaceful tribe at Tapirape, an agricultural settlement on the river bank.

They soon found that the women were well-built and were accomplished at various native crafts. So they started a friendship with the tribe and arranged an annual meeting on one of the tributaries of the Araguaya river, to exchange produce.

This went on until 1933 when suddenly the peace-loving tribe was attacked by the Carajas, who took the women and girls to the sand-banks of their own river, leaving the tribe of the Tapirape too weak even to consider revenge.

The women of the Carajas enjoy all the rights of the men except that of feeding the family. But, alas for the man who offends his wife! Not only will she hit, kick and scratch him, but also she will throw all his belongings from the hut (which is the property of the woman) and he is left with nothing to eat.

These muscular athletes do nothing to retaliate, but as even love in the wilderness cannot last on an empty stomach and no help can be obtained from a neighbour, for the women of the village show a united front, he often has to go down the river to another settlement to get food.

About halfway down the Araguaya river, in central Brazil, is the largest river-island in the world, the "Ilha do Bananal." Its name seemed odd to me because I did not notice one single banana plantation, but I saw something of far greater interest—the Hurana Dance of the Caraja Indios.

Like most dances of primitive people, the Hurana is a ritual dance and men only are allowed to take part in it. In certain seasons the sacred masks are taken from secret places in the forests, where they have been hidden by a few privileged members of the tribe, and carried to the men's house which women are forbidden to enter, under penalty of death.

After the warriors have carefully painted their bodies black and red, two of them put on dance-masks, made of strips of leaves of Babassu-palms, to drive away the evil-demons.

The mask-dress is made up of three parts. Two parts, similar to a woman's wrap, are laid one each round the hips and over the shoulders in such way that arms and legs are covered. Over head and shoulders is placed a cowl-shaped head-dress about two feet high, with two extensions, like feelers of a butterfly, coming out on top, from which bundles of multi-coloured feathers hang down suspended on cords, the whole affair being richly decorated with red, yellow, blue, green, black, white, and pink feathers.

Under the leadership of the village magician and accompanied by the glaringly painted warriors, the mask-dancers, coming from the men's house, run yelling towards the village where the women and children, howling and trembling with fear and horror, await them.

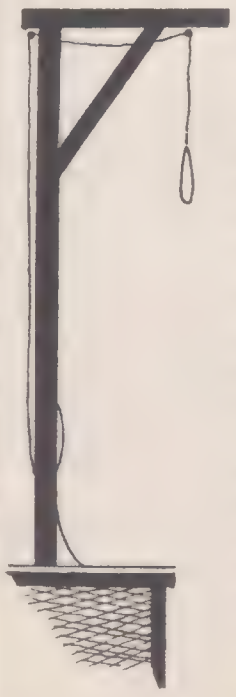
Some of the women now bring along big earthenware dishes of food to calm the ghosts and put them in front of the group.

After taking the gifts into the mask-house, the dancers appear and begin to caper locked together by their arms, so that they look like Siamese twins.

The dance consists of innumerable, but exactly specified jumps, bows and distortions. Sometimes the men dance in turn to the left and to the right while the rest of the warriors surround them and clap rhythmically with their hollowed palms.

The dance goes on for hours. From time to time the dancers disappear into the mask-house to pass on the masks to other dancers, while they drop on the floor half dead, to allow their sweating, exhausted and trembling bodies to recover.

Throughout the forest sound the howling and crying of women and children, the rhythmic clapping of the warriors and the hollow stamp of the new dancers.



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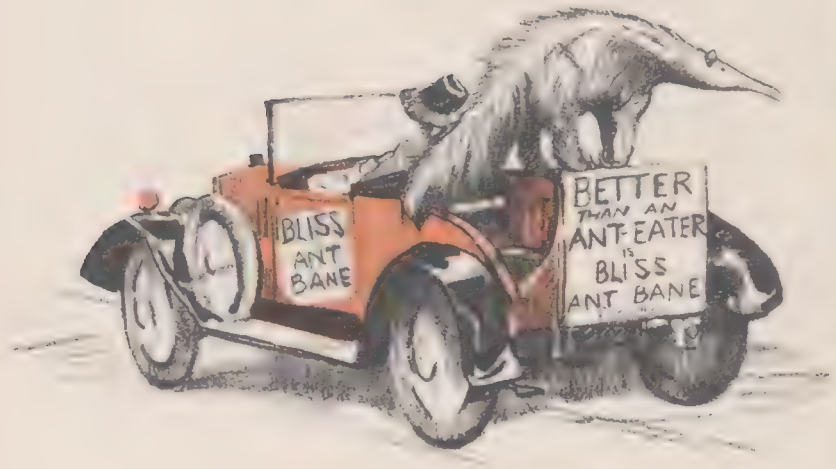
NEXT WEEK

BIG GAME GASKIN



The colonel had been poison to elephants, but was in a bad way until an ant-bane inventor made him chicken-broth. "Barmy, did you say?" asks Professor Sebastian Bliss. "That's your viewpoint, my friend." The Eighth Wonder of the World is also revealed in this unusual story

BY GEOFFREY WILLIAMSON

ILLUSTRATED BY S. TRESILIAN

"LIFE'S window," declared Professor Sebastian Bliss, presumably for the benefit of the gulls circling over the cliffs at Channel Bay, "has a two-way view. A ten-foot hollyhock may fill a bowed gardener's heart with pride, but it is insignificant to an aviator."

He paused for a second, and then added in an undertone: "This, and fifty-seven other profound reflections, packed in a strong wooden box, suitable for export, complete with full instructions—ninepence!"

"Barmy!" muttered a chair attendant who had overheard this strange soliloquy; but the professor, whose acute ear also caught the muttered comment, embarrassed the man by turning upon him with an enigmatical smile.

"Barmy, did you say? That's your viewpoint, my friend," he said, pleasantly. "But I hope to demonstrate the truth of my assertion before very long. I have just arrived in this town from—it doesn't really matter—bound for—nowhere in particular, and already I know all about your ants."

The attendant could only stare in blank wonderment. He had never encountered anyone quite like this loquacious stranger. Limitless benevolence was reflected in his merry, grey eyes, which twinkled behind enormous horn-rimmed glasses; his figure was comfortably rotund and, though his hair was silver white, his chubby features glowed with vitality and were full of curves that gave him an almost boyish appearance.

There was, in fact, something distinctive in his general appearance. Because of his flowing hair, he might have passed for a music-teacher or an artist, a suggestion that was heightened by the fact that he wore a flowing mauve bow tie and a broad-brimmed felt hat of mulberry hue. But he carried no satchel or portfolio; nothing, indeed, except a black ebony walking-stick with a carved, ivory handle. He was dressed in a loosely cut alpaca suit of a shade that toned with his hat.

"Yes," went on the professor, with an almost boyish gusto, "nearly everyone with whom I have spoken has remarked that the place is suffering from a phenomenal plague of ants, but that nothing they can do seems to keep them down."

"That's true enough," responded the other. "We always get them here in the summer, but I've never seen such swarms before as I have this year."

"Exactly," chimed in the professor, flourishing his ebony stick, "and, to return to my contention that life's window has a two-way view, let me observe that while ants may be a plague and a pest to five thousand households, they may come to one man as a boon and a blessing. I am—or at least I intend to be—that very man! Already I have a plan for their complete extermination. Yes, sir, I am a reincarnation of the Pied Piper and I propose to rid your town of ants."

"Well, if you can do that," observed the chair attendant, with a chuckle, "you'll be the most popular fellow in the whole of Channel Bay."

"I care nothing for the plaudits of the populace," was the professor's instant retort. "My intentions, sir, are wholly mercenary. I propose to place my piping on a strictly commercial basis, for:

"Though I'll pipe the pests away,
I'll make the people pay, and *pay*!"

"Well, good luck to you," said the perplexed attendant and passed on hurriedly, convinced that he had been talking with a madman.

Actually, there was no saner person in Channel Bay that afternoon than Professor Sebastian Bliss. For all his eccentricity, he was a man of remarkable parts. He led a vague, purposeless existence, relying, in all his shiftless wanderings, solely upon his wits.

A man of sixty, his earlier life was lost in obscurity. He had an extensive knowledge of miscellaneous subjects, ranging from chemistry and the practice of medicine to poetry and art; and he could boast considerable erudition and polish that were not always apparent in a casual encounter. His greatest asset was his eloquence, for he had a fine, resonant voice with hypnotic qualities.

Sometimes, when funds allowed, he would hire village halls and lecture on such vague subjects as "The Incredibility of Reality," or, by way of variation (though in another village, of course), on "The Reality of Incredibility."

Property he despised. "The truly happy man," he would tell his village or small-town audiences before taking up a collection, "is he who has least possessions." And, practising what he preached for once, he was content to journey through life with only two tangible assets. The first was an ancient two-seater car, which he affectionately termed "The Eighth Wonder of the World," because it was "an incredible reality" that it still functioned efficiently. The second was an up-to-date, portable printing press, on which he was wont to produce his strangely assorted visiting cards and bills or labels, which formed an indispensable adjunct to his various enterprises.

Altogether, he was an amazing humbug; yet he humbugged no one more than himself. One day, he was quite convinced, he would settle down in some

Bliss allowed his eyes to wander round the apartment. "Shades of Bostock!" he exclaimed, beneath his breath. "Is it me who's unconscious or is this real?"

quiet, cathedral town to produce a great philosophy on life. He had been going to start this great work "to-morrow" for at least twenty years!

He was a Doctor of Philosophy and a Professor of Psychology, having obtained both distinctions at five dollars apiece from a postal university conducted from an accommodation address in a remote American city. But his real education had been a hard one, gained during a life of battling. He was widely read, though, and had picked up many unique, if not wholly accurate, fragments of knowledge in the course of his chequered wanderings.

Above all, he was an opportunist, as witness his decision to make capital out of the unprecedented plague of ants with which the little seaside town he was now visiting was afflicted.

When he arrived in Channel Bay that morning he had been quite without any plan of campaign, but hearing talk of ants everywhere, his alert brain had at once seized upon the possibility of exploiting the situation for his own gain. First he had made a tour of the town, calling at every chemist's shop to buy up certain ingredients for a new and wholly untried, concoction to be dubbed "Bliss Ant-Bane." He had also laid in a stock of stout manilla envelopes, after which he had parked "The Eighth Wonder" and had come to stroll upon the low cliffs to perfect the details of his proposed plan of campaign.

The more he thought about it, the more delighted he became. With the aid of his press, he could soon transform those envelopes into convincing-looking packets for the Bliss Ant-Bane. Sold from door to door at sixpence a time, and "warranted" (the professor knew better than to say "guaranteed") to exterminate any ants that came near it, the powder would soon bring him in a satisfactory return. The professor had not bothered to do any exact costing; when your profits lie in the region of 600 per cent., you can afford to dispense with book-keeping!

He was not without funds, but he liked to make every fresh enterprise self-supporting. He proposed, therefore, to devote the profits from initial sales to extending his activities by producing larger and more impressive packets. In this way he expected to clear a good sum by the end of a week, which was about the limit of time he ever devoted to one locality.

But even the plans of Professor Sebastian Bliss miscarried sometimes and, though he could not guess it, his brilliant Ant-Bane campaign was to be abandoned for a venture of a very different character, and many weeks were to elapse before he saw the last of Channel Bay.

He printed his envelopes overnight and devoted the following morning to filling them with the greyish powder concocted from the ingredients bought from the various chemists in the town. Then, packing the finished products into an attaché case, he set off in the "Eighth Wonder" to begin, as he thought, his systematic tour of the district.

The results were most gratifying. Nearly every householder he approached bought a packet of Ant-Bane, without persuasion, and in no case did the professor find it necessary to produce one of the cards he had taken the precaution of printing with the following inscription:

"Professor Sebastian Bliss, Ph.D., Ps.D., Pestology Expert, London, Paris and Vienna."

At the close of the afternoon he had sold over one hundred packets. His pockets were heavy with sixpences and he was beginning to grow just a trifle bored with the whole proposition, and was tempted to abandon it as too simple and sordidly commercial for a man of his unique attainments, when a dramatic diversion brought his canvassing tour to a sudden stop.

He was about to knock at a dingy house, standing in very neglected grounds, having noted with satisfaction that the step was swarming with ants, when the door was flung open and an elderly man, clad in a dressing-gown, confronted him.

"Ah, doctor, I am glad you have come. I'm afraid I need you rather badly—oh, you're *not* Doctor Stevens!"

The voice was strained and weak and, swaying slightly, the man sought to steady himself in the doorway, loosened his grip and sank to the ground with a stifled sigh. The professor threw aside his attaché case and instantly knelt beside the householder, placing an arm beneath his head, and raising him gently into a sitting posture.

At that moment the gate-latch clicked and, glancing over his shoulder, the professor saw a dark-clad figure, case in hand, hurrying up the weed-grown drive.

"Doctor number two," he murmured to himself. "And not a moment too soon, by the look of things."

The doctor took in the situation at a glance, laid his own case aside and, without a word, helped the professor to raise the fallen man and carry him inside. Bliss could easily have accomplished the task alone, for their burden was incredibly frail.

When the unconscious man had been comfortably disposed upon a settee in the front room and the doctor was making his examination, Bliss allowed his eyes to wander round the apartment, absorbing every detail of its interior.

"Shades of Bostock!" he exclaimed, beneath his breath. "Is it *me* who's unconscious, or is this real?"

The interior of that room certainly presented an astonishing appearance, for though the settee and a small writing-desk formed its sole articles of furniture, there was scarcely room to move. A giraffe, whose ears scraped the ceiling, filled one corner; a gorilla, leering realistically, hung from a cornice; a wild boar pursued invisible quarry in the fireplace; a magnificent Bengal tiger crouched menacingly in the bay window; while an antelope and three gazelle gambolled across the room in a state of suspended animation. The walls, too, were covered with tusks and antlers and spears and shields and fire-arms in such profusion that the veriest dullard must have concluded that the tenant was an enthusiastic hunter of big game.

Bliss was greatly fascinated. Anything bizarre instantly appealed to his imagination and as he looked round the crowded room, his mind, ever responsive to suggestion, followed the most curious channels of thought. It is not possible to reproduce his musings effectively. Let it suffice to say that one of his first thoughts ran something like this: "If the old boy's got an ant-eater, I'll jolly well buy it and tote it round on 'The Eighth Wonder.' That'll boost sales. 'Bliss Ant-Bane Beats Ant-eaters.' There's a slogan for you!"

So his thoughts raced on and it was only with an effort that he brought himself back to earth and remembered that he was not alone.

"How is he, doctor?" he ventured, solicitously. "Looks pretty far gone to me. Wonder when he last had a good square meal?"

"You're right," assented the doctor. "Sheer debility, induced by starvation. He sent a message by the postman, asking me to call. Did you get one too?"

"No; I am here on another mission altogether," was the professor's casual reply. "But that can wait. The question now is, what is the best thing to be done for our patient?"

He used the "our" with particular relish.

"There are two things Colonel Gaskin needs," observed the doctor, "nourishment and careful nursing. I've been trying hard to persuade him to go into hospital for a spell, but the old fellow's as obstinate as a mule. Won't be treated as an

(*please turn to page* 16)

invalid; shuts himself up here like a hermit and starves himself because he's too proud to—ah! he's coming round."

The colonel slowly opened his eyes and gazed up in a bewildered fashion.

"What happened?" he asked. "Oh, yes, I remember—the door. Don't tell me I fainted? Damn stupid of me; never felt fitter in my life!"

He made a valiant effort to rise, but the doctor pushed him, gently but firmly, back into a reclining posture.

"Now listen to me," he said, sternly. "I've heard enough of your 'never felt fitter' nonsense. You're in no state to be out of bed at all and the sooner you realise that the better. You've simply got to rest and take proper nourishment, and if you won't follow advice here, you'll have to be sent somewhere where you'll be made to do so."

"Cut it short, doctor," snapped the colonel, with a faint show of spirit. "We've had all this out before and I've told you I stand by my guns. I shall be perfectly all right in a day or two. I——" He sank back again, exhausted by the effort; his eyes closed and his breathing became heavy.

"Come along," was the doctor's command to Bliss, "help me to get him into bed."

Together they carried the old man upstairs. He was now too feeble to protest and was soon tucked into bed and made comfortable.

"There," commented the doctor. "We'll take all his clothes away and he'll have to stay here. Then I'll send a nurse along and we'll have no more nonsense. By the way, are you a friend of his? If so, perhaps you wouldn't mind staying with him until the nurse arrives?"

The professor always thought quickly and, almost without hesitation, he nodded as if in assent.

"My name is Bliss," he announced, theatrically. "Sebastian Bliss. My card."

The doctor studied it closely.

"Oh, I see," he said, though naturally he saw nothing and was still entirely in the dark. "Known the colonel long?"

"Quite a while," was the deliberate response. Ever an opportunist, the professor relegated insects in the form of ants, to oblivion and began to think in terms of bigger game. "As a matter of fact," he continued, "Colonel Gaskin and I have much in common, and I am here in an advisory capacity. You see, the colonel is very worried about his collection. He is afraid that it is deteriorating.

"As a pestologist, I have made a particular study of treating big-game trophies, so the colonel has invited me to overhaul some of his more valuable specimens for him."

Doctor Stevens frowned towards the patient, who was now in a deep sleep.

"Just like him!" was his blunt comment. "He's got through a fortune in bagging his collection and having his trophies stuffed and now, when he's as poor as a church mouse in consequence, he'd still rather spend his last remaining penny on it rather than on himself. The house, as you must have noticed, is chock-full of his musty old treasures; yet if he'd only agree to sell some of them he might live in reasonable comfort for the rest of his days. Forgive me if I speak bluntly, but my feelings on the subject are very strong."

"That's understandable," was the suave reply. "I agree with you that it does seem folly. But *my* services will cost Colonel Gaskin nothing. It will be a labour of love, I assure you. And, as you say, the colonel needs attention first, or he will be as dead as his trophies. With your permission, doctor, I should like to nurse him, myself. My duties in examining the colonel's collection will keep me here in the house for several weeks at least, but they will not be so exacting as to prevent my looking after their owner properly.

"Also, don't you think he'll be far more tractable with me than in the hands of some strange young woman? I was a hospital orderly throughout the war, so I'm not altogether new to the nursing game. What do you say?"

The doctor pondered the proposition and, seeing that he was wavering, Bliss quickly continued.

"Fortunately, I am in a position to provide all the delicacies and luxuries he needs; and in between while I shall be able to get on with my other job—though you needn't be afraid that I shall neglect our patient. Just give me your instructions as to diet and they shall be carried out to the letter. The rest you can safely leave to me, and I'll guarantee to have him on his feet in record time."

"Thank you, it's most kind of you to make this offer," said the doctor, obviously relieved to be able to pass on some of the responsibility for such a difficult and unusual patient.

He took out his fountain-pen and wrote steadily for several minutes. "There," he said. "Start him on this diet as soon as he wakes. And be firm with him. On no account let him attempt to get out of bed or overtax his strength. I'll look in to-morrow and see how he's going on, though I can see I'm leaving him in good hands."

When the doctor had departed, Bliss made out a list of delicacies for the patient and provisions for himself and, slipping out to the gate, presently hailed a passing errand boy.

"Like to earn a shilling?" he asked. "Right. Just leave this order at the best grocery store in the town. Say I want immediate delivery, as some of the things are required for an invalid. Thanks!"

While the youngster hurried off, Bliss retrieved "The Eighth Wonder" from a point where he had left it farther down the road. He was more than thankful that the ramshackle vehicle had not been left at the colonel's gate to betray him. It was impossible to garage the car immediately, he found, for the garage was crammed to the roof with further evidence of the colonel's hunting prowess. "Gaskin first, Nimrod nowhere!" was the professor's comment, as he wheeled the "Wonder" behind a screening clump of laurels.

The things he had ordered were very soon delivered, so, stripping off his coat and rolling up his sleeves, Bliss busied himself in the kitchen. There was much cleaning-up to be done, but he tackled the work with a will, only pausing at intervals to tip-toe upstairs and take a peep at his sleeping patient.

When Colonel Gaskin finally awoke, considerably revived by his long rest, though still perceptibly weak, Bliss was ready with a steaming bowl of chicken broth and some morsels of crisp toast.

"Take this and talk afterwards," he commanded, to stem the torrent of bewildered questionings that poured from the invalid's mouth. But while the colonel obeyed, Bliss indulged in a deal of effective talking on his own account.

"No doubt you were surprised to wake up and find yourself in bed, with me doing a fairy godmother act; but the explanation is very simple. When you fainted a second time, Doctor Stevens insisted that you should be put to bed at once, and it was his suggestion that I should remain with you. He knew that you would not tolerate a nurse about the place. Although we had never met before, he had heard of my work, and when I told him that I should be in Channel Bay for some time and offered to look after you, he thought it a capital arrangement."

A puzzled wrinkle appeared in the colonel's brow as he eyed the speaker.

"But who the devil are you, sir?" he demanded.

"Ah, forgive me," murmured Bliss, in conciliatory tones. "I quite forgot that I had not introduced myself." He coughed softly, fumbled for a card, and handed it to the other, who, naturally, derived not the slightest scrap of enlightenment from it.

"Although of late I have made an intensive study of pestology," went on the professor, hurriedly, in explanation, "I ought to tell you that some years ago I was curator of the big-game section of the Vance Museum of California. It was there that I chanced to hear of your collection, sir, and I made a firm resolve that if ever I found myself in England I would make a point of calling upon you with a request to be allowed to examine some of your specimens which, I was assured, were truly wonderful."

"Really," purred the colonel, never for a second doubting the sincerity of the other's remarks. "I had no idea that my fame had spread so far. I wonder who could have mentioned my collection to you?"

Bliss puckered up his brows and made a very convincing show of trying to ransack his brain.

"Dear me, it was on the tip of my tongue. But one met so many people in those days. Visitors came from all parts of the world, you know."

"Perhaps you saw some mention in a London paper?" volunteered the colonel, helpfully. "A number of photographs were published in my earlier days, and——"

"That's it!" lied Bliss enthusiastically, slapping his thigh. "One of the visitors from England showed me some of them. Well, now I'm here, let me say how sorry I am to find you temporarily laid up; but I trust you will soon be yourself again."

"Thank you," replied the colonel. "I regret being unable to offer you much in the way of hospitality, but——"

"Pray, don't mention it. I'm an old campaigner, like yourself, sir, and if you will permit me to remain, as Doctor Stevens suggests, you need have no fear that I shall not be able to make myself quite comfortable. And I shan't fuss round you and irritate you like a nurse would, taking your temperature every few minutes, or turning your pillows just as you are comfortable."

The mental picture of a masterful female in blue print and stiffened cuffs that the professor's words conjured up, carried the day. Colonel Gaskin turned upon his genial visitor with a smile.

"I appreciate your kindness," he said. "Do you think I could have a little more of that very excellent broth?"

For the next few days Bliss had his hands full, but he stuck manfully to his task, and the doctor, who called daily, was loud in his praise of the volunteer nurse.

"You're handling him perfectly," he declared. "He's appreciably stronger already. If you continue to make him rest and not get up, he'll be fit again in no time."

As for Colonel Gaskin, he seemed to have taken so cordially to his genial nurse that the doctor never entertained the slightest suspicion that they were anything but old friends.

Bliss was very deft in controlling the conversation whenever the doctor was present. What the doctor did not know was that from the first day, almost, Bliss had laid heavy siege to the old colonel's heart by encouraging him to talk big game for hours on end.

Owing to his solitary existence, the colonel had long been denied an audience for his endless reminiscences of prowess in the jungle or on the veld, and here he found himself provided not only with an enthusiastic listener, but one who was ever eager to hear more.

When Bliss played his trump card and offered to run his pestologist's eye over the collection without fee, the colonel's gratitude and delight knew no bounds.

"That's exceedingly kind of you," he declared, warmly. "I'm afraid that quite a number of the pieces have suffered. I haven't the facilities here for storing or displaying them to their best advantage. That Himalayan antelope, for instance, seems to have deteriorated, and most of the bigger pieces need attention."

"I agree," commented Bliss. "Give me time, and I'll run through the whole collection. With your permission, I'll clear the garage and make it my workshop. There is more light, you know."

"Do just as you please, Bliss," the colonel conceded. "I only wish I could watch you at work. Do you think that fool of a doctor will let me get up soon?"

"I shouldn't be in too much of a hurry, if I were you," countered Bliss. "We don't want to undo all the good that's been done. Now tell me more about that rhino you got with one shot in Nairobi."

Bliss, feigning rapt attention, turned his deaf ear and concentrated inwardly on the perfection of a plan that had been germinating in his brain for days.

Bliss had been nurse and general factotum to Colonel Gaskin for a week when the doctor announced that it would not be necessary for him to call again. The colonel was, indeed, progressing rapidly. The delicacies liberally supplied by Bliss had soon restored his starved frame, and the fact of being able to talk freely on his favourite topic had proved an added tonic.

(*please turn to page* 32)

MYSTIC
OR — ?

What strange power has the mysterious Indian Soothsayer that he can influence the mind of FRANCIS FOSTER until the end of his days?

Is it just pretence or is it something supernatural fulfilling a Divine purpose? Read the startling facts revealed in "SEPARATE STAR," the kind of story that will set you thinking furiously, in the "Passing Show"

NEXT WEEK

The world is their oyster, but the men who pilot the taxis of the air find more perils than pearls in it, during the course of their work

BY VINCENT BROME

CABBIES OF THE CLOUDS

ANDREWS accepted a commission to fly from Bordeaux to Spain with an invalid passenger without knowing that he would carry a soldier who was to provide the world's headlines for more than two years. The invalid caused a mighty stir in Burgos when they landed, for it was General Franco on his way to start the Spanish war!

This shows that the unexpected is very much part of the taxi-pilot's life. The simplest commissions sometimes take on quite new proportions. Strict privacy is preserved. Few questions asked. If a famous passenger wishes to travel incognito that is no concern of the taxi-pilot.

The private registers of the air-taxi companies cover a dazzling galaxy of famous figures. Kings, Queens, princes, lords and their ladies, stage people and Big Noises from the army and navy.

Alexander Korda appears to make extensive use of privately chartered planes. Grindell Matthews frequently flies back to his experiments in Wales and the King of Siam and a dozen eastern potentates are always going places in flying cabs.

For instance, in the hushed expectancy of dawn the telephone at Corvett's elbow rang steadily. He stirred, turned over, reached out an uncertain hand and grunted into the mouthpiece. Then, suddenly, action. . . .

An eastern potentate, greeting the dawn with deep genuflection, had decided that England wasn't all his Anglicised brothers made it out to be. He wanted to get back to his palace in double-quick time.

Down the ranks of his retinue the message passed, and in the small office at Heston, where the lights were dimming with morning, the sleepy controller decided to which of his two night pilots should go the job of flying the eastern gentleman home to his harem.

Finally, he picked on night taxi-pilot Corvett, who bundled clothes, shaving materials and pipes into his bag, said the usual comforting words to his half-awake wife, who one day might get used to this sort of thing, and then went off into the morning, into the air and half way across the world.

That might happen in the life of any cloud-cabby. His turn for night duty can produce the most remarkable jobs. England's main air-taxi-ranks are at Heston and Croydon, at which three score flying men foregather daily, ready at a moment's notice to fly to Newcastle, Brighton, Timbuctoo or the interior of Africa. You can hail a plane to-day in just the same way as you hail a taxi.

And the fare is cheaper! Three passengers chartering a plane to fly to Wales probably pay fourpence each a mile. One-passenger trips in Leopard Moths run out at ninepence a mile. Two passengers pay fourpence-halfpenny each. No

Veteran-pilot Birkett had an amusing experience with a passenger who wanted to deliver a packet to a passenger on the *Majestic* whilst sailing in mid-ocean

tipping, no jams, no traffic lights to run up the meter.

And this life of an air-taxi pilot abounds with thrills and comedies. Not that there is anything particularly dangerous in their routine work. It is the unusual job which may bring excitements.

Veteran-pilot Birkett was asked on one occasion to overtake the *Majestic*, outward bound from Southampton, with a special outfit designed for one of the passengers. The outfit had missed the boat by minutes and it was decided that it must be delivered by plane.

Birkett quickly overtook the liner, and manœuvred into position close above the funnels. Behind him a representative of the fashion house sat waiting his command to release the cardboard box. They intended to drop it on the deck below.

Birkett gave the word "Go." For some reason the command was not fulfilled quickly enough. On the point of saying "Too late, we'll try again" Birkett caught a glimpse of the box flashing downwards. It missed the liner and went straight into the ocean!

Charter-pilot Spratt, of Air Commerce, was engaged, on another occasion, to fly to Tangiers. The Spanish war made matters a little difficult and Spratt finally found it necessary to fly via Sardinia. Approaching the aerodrome, he was startled to see excited figures directing anti-aircraft guns towards his machine. Ten seconds later shells were screaming into the air.

Coolly, quietly, he brought the plane down unscathed. Then he discovered what all the fuss was about.

The aerodrome had just been converted into a military base. Spratt was arrested immediately and taken off to the local gaol. In the first place, his machine had been taken for an enemy bomber, and suspicions once aroused, the authorities weren't altogether happy about him even when he landed a civil machine quite unarmed.

Spratt spent some very unpleasant hours in that badly ventilated gaol. Its walls were green with age and his sole relaxation was a drink with the gaoler in the evening. Finally his release was granted.

Distributing news-reels is another interesting side of the taxi-pilot's work. During the last few years plane-distribution has accelerated the process enormously. Coronation day brought some dramatic moments for news-reel pilots.

The evening produced unpleasant flying weather in many districts, with mist periodically swirling down and blotting out everything. Since time pressed even more than usual, special arrangements were made. Instead of landing to distribute the films, they were to be dropped by parachute.

The first parachute with its precious load slipped away at the lowest possible altitude over Cardiff. It hit the ground, jumped, jumped again and then began to drag. Waiting only to see the local representative converging on that tin, the pilot turned his machine towards the Midlands. The process was repeated at Birmingham, Leicester and Northampton.

Disaster nearly overtook one pilot. He ran into thick fog and lost his bearings.

Hurtling through a wet blanket that periodically blots out everything is no picnic, especially when you are travelling at a hundred miles an hour.

For fifteen minutes he continued to grope his way along. Then something enormous suddenly loomed up. The pilot swerved his plane sharply. . . . It might have been a chimney, it might have been a tower. . . . Whatever it was, he was now lost. Slowly the fog became worse. Even the steel nerves of that case-hardened pilot could not completely control his uneasiness.

At last he decided there was only one thing to be done—land. And with a skill born of a thousand yesterdays flying, he brought the plane down safely in a field.

Climbing out he made for the road he had noticed in his descent. A long, powerful car was approaching. He signalled the driver to stop, and found himself confronted by one of Britain's leading millionaires who immediately offered to drive the films back the way he had come.

So a certain town in the north of England would never have seen the Coronation film that night, but for the help of that millionaire. This story was given me by pilot Woollard, but he cannot disclose the town or name of the millionaire.

The fares of the cloud-cabbies vary from films to film-stars, invalids to kings. Highly trained "B" pilots, permitted in many cases to operate the radio themselves, these men will land you in a local field, or at a busy aerodrome. Weather certainly counts, but it has to be pretty bad to put them off.

"I've given Thrupley the day off to attempt a channel swim."

Laugh

The "PASSING SHOW

"Quiet, darling, while daddy's conducting the B.B.C. Symphony concert!"

"He's too old for rabbiting; he only mouses now!"

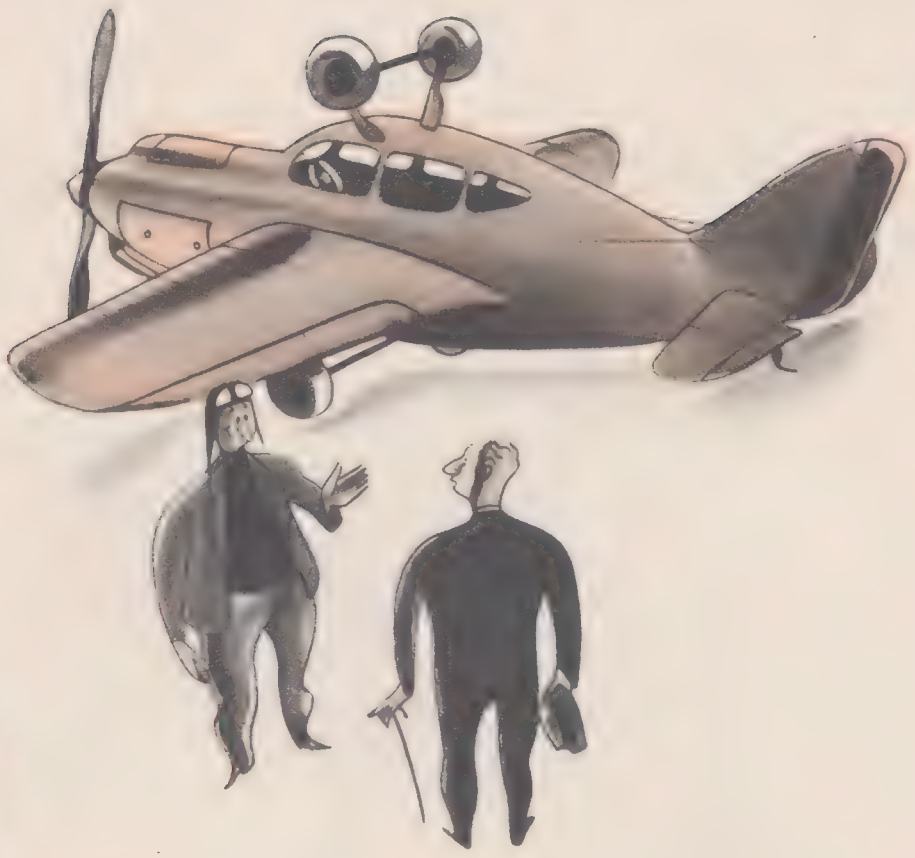
"I just put my ear to the ground and some silly fool trod on it."

lkter

"W" Smile Section

"We've got the bailiff in again, sir!"

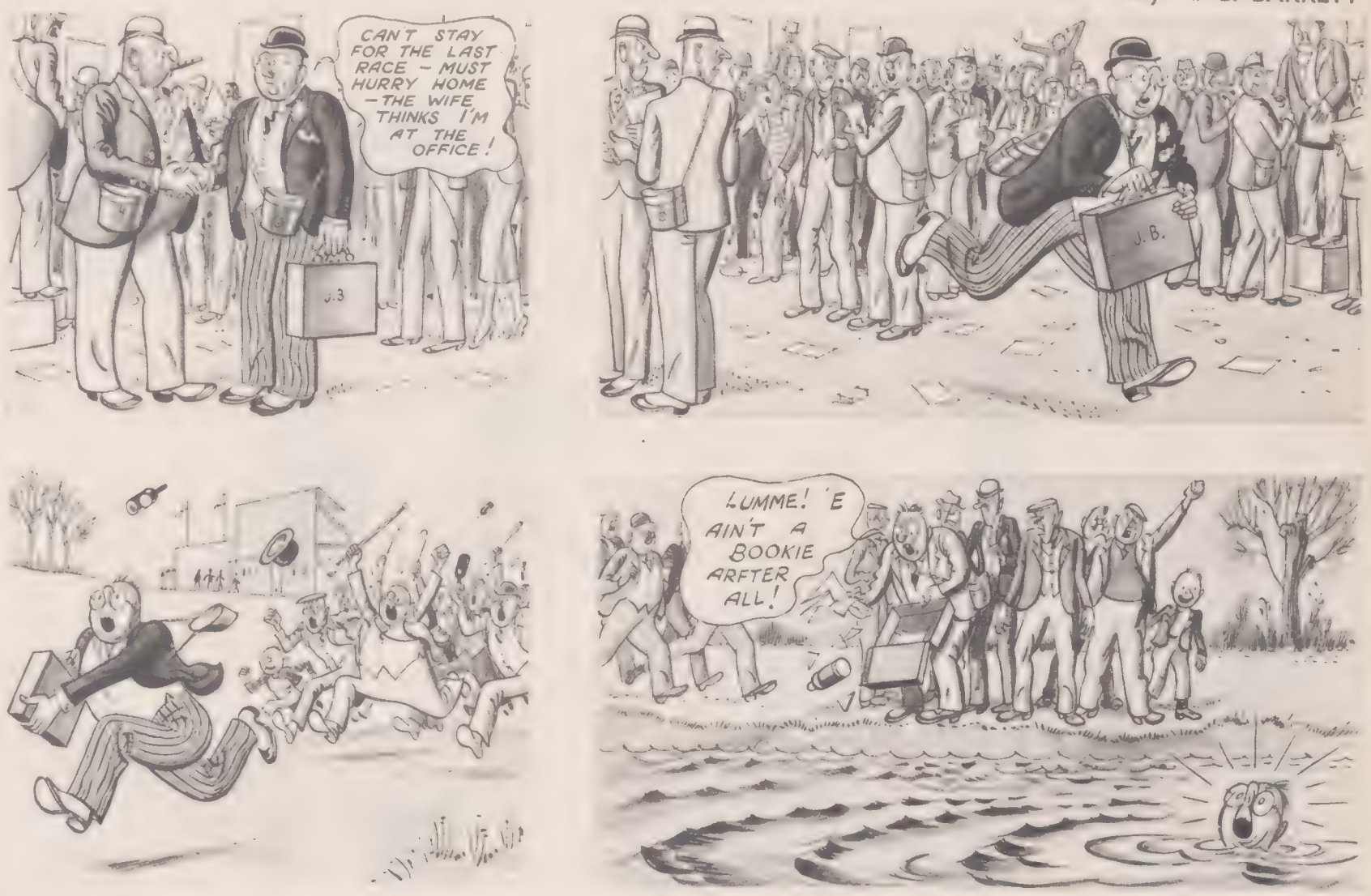
"Certainly they're pure wool, madam. See, there's a moth!"



"I'm teaching the wife to fly."

A MAN AT THE RACES

By A. C. BARRETT



LAUGH WITH THE WORLD

Son: "Dad, I have managed to raise ten bob."

Father: "Good—a youth should try as early as possible to make himself independent of his father—what did you do to get it?"

Son: "Borrowed it from Mother."

Bertoldo, Milan.

Waiter: "We have two qualities of turtle soup, sir, real and mock."

Client: "What is the difference?"

Waiter: "The mock-turtle is made with one turtle-soup square and the real turtle with two." *El Hogar, Buenos Aires.*

Mother: "Mabel's sweetheart seems to be offended. Have you said anything to him?"

Father: "Not a word. I have not seen him since I sent him last month's electric light bill." *Muskete, Vienna.*

Husband: "Did you see that the favourite was beaten yesterday?"

Wife: "I am not interested in horse-racing."

Husband: "You ought to be. I put your housekeeping money on it."

Simplicissimus, Munich.

Visitor: "Nice quiet place you have, here."
Farmer: "It was until that fellow got a wireless."
Smiths Weekly, Sydney.

THE SUIT CASE

CAMEO STORY
BY PETER FABRIZIUS

THE suitcase stood in the hall of the Majestic Hotel, close to the hall porter's desk. It was not very large, but was made of good leather and, from the care taken of it, Bill concluded that its contents must be valuable.

And Bill ought to know. When a man in full evening dress insists on carrying his own suitcase and will not allow one of the hotel servants to carry it for him, the contents must be either jewels or valuable papers. Bill could make good use of either.

Suddenly the following occurred. The man in the top hat had almost reached the swing-doors, when the hall porter ran after him and whispered something in his ear. The man looked worried and, impressively handing the suitcase to the porter, hurried into a telephone box. At the same moment, a stout woman came up and spoke to the hall porter, who, placing the suitcase on the floor next to him, turned to the desk. These few seconds were enough for Bill to seize the case, leave the hotel and jump into a passing taxi.

There he sat with the valuable case on his knees. What would it contain? Gold, diamonds, drafts, cash? Breathing heavily he flung back the lid. The case was empty!

Angrily he tapped on the window and told the driver to stop. It was useless to spend any more money after having drawn a blank. Reluctantly he paid the fare and was pleased that at least he could get rid of the case by leaving it in the taxi.

He had barely taken a dozen steps, when someone tapped him on the shoulder.

"You left your case in the cab," said the driver, handing him the confounded thing. That cost Bill another tip.

He stood in one of the busiest streets with the stolen case in his hand. To his annoyance he saw approaching, a fat, American woman to whom he had been very attentive for the last few days, with an eye to her diamonds.

"Mr. Brinsfield!" she cried—that being the name by which he had introduced himself—"where are you going with that lovely suitcase?"

"To see you," replied Bill, with commendable presence of mind. "I was bringing you this lovely suitcase."

"Oh," she cried, astonished at the unusualness of the gift. She was not yet used to European customs; perhaps it was the practice to give suitcases to ladies whom one had only known for a few days. Perhaps, also, the actual gift was inside. She pressed the catch and opened the lid.

"Oh," she cried, overwhelmed, "but how sweet of you! How glorious!" And from the case she took a huge bunch of lovely red roses. "At first I thought it was the case you were giving me." She took Bill's hand. "How original you are! Where did you get such beautiful roses?"

Bill would have given a lot to know the answer to that question. Now he had the wretched case back on his hands again and, to make matters worse, the American woman as well. He tried hard to make conversation, but it seemed as though everyone was staring at him, the case and the out-size in bouquets.

"Where did you get such beautiful roses?"

Suddenly a hand was laid on his arm. He turned to find a huge policeman standing by him pointing to the case. But instead of the arrest which Bill expected, the policeman politely said: "Excuse me, sir, you are losing something out of your case."

Bill looked down and saw a bright red ribbon hanging out. As he angrily pulled at it, there seemed to be no end. It flowed from the case as a waterfall flows from the rocks. After the red ribbon came a blue, then a green, a white, a yellow and finally there appeared a giant Stars and Stripes, followed closely by a Union Jack of the same dimensions. As soon as this was over, two canaries flew out and settled on each of Bill's shoulders.

"'Ere, what's all this about?" asked the policeman.

A crowd had collected and a second policeman had to force his way through. "Here it is!' he cried, excitedly. Then turning to his colleague, he explained.

"Signor Valledetti, who's on at the Empire this week, had his case stolen just now—his conjuring case."

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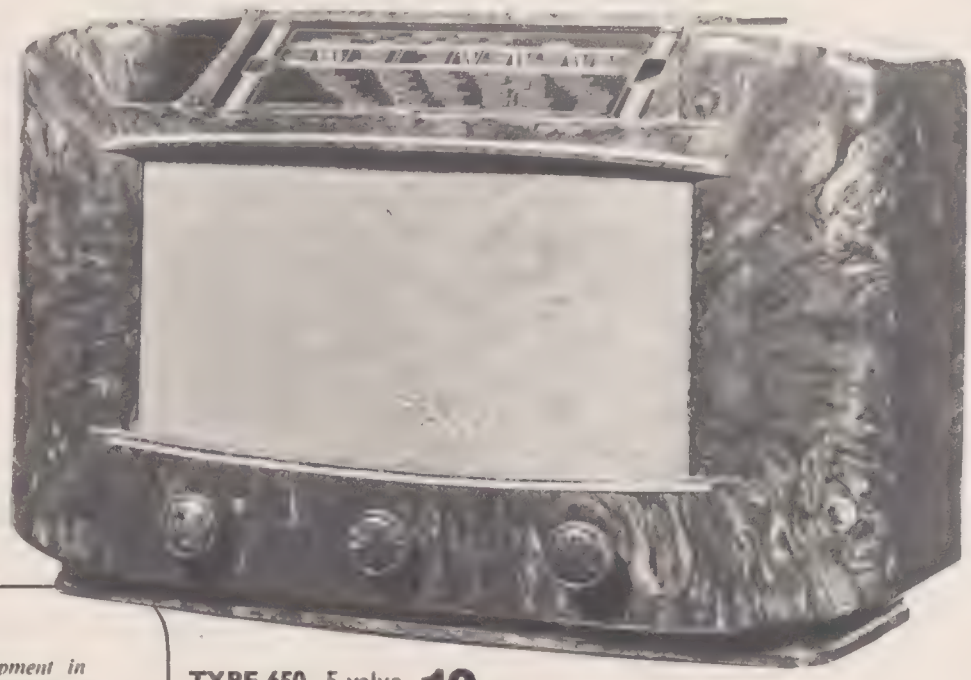

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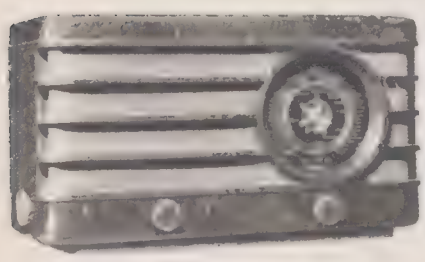

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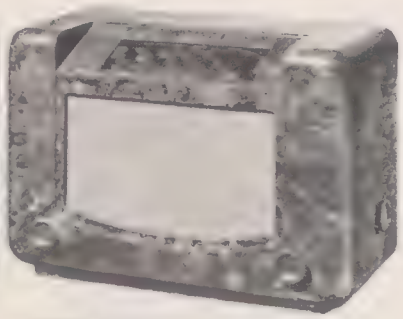

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Concluding

THE FLYING YORKSHIREMAN

Sam Small, a travelling Yorkshireman, is in Hollywood when he discovers that he can fly and, to the amazement of the United States, he agrees to fly at Madison Square Garden to prove that he is as good as any bird

BY ERIC KNIGHT

ILLUSTRATED BY CLIXBY WATSON

THE next day the papers were all drawn up and signed.

"Now we're set," the young man said. "It's no use fooling with the movies, because people seeing a picture would only think it a fake. We'll hire Madison Square Garden in New York. All you'll have to do is just once each day take off and fly round in the Garden. I'll get the plane tickets and we'll fly east to-morrow."

"Fly," Mully said. "Why lewk, then. Happen tha'd better get nobbut two tickets, and Sam could fly alongside us. Us'd save one fare that way."

"That's a champion idea," Sam said. "But there's ma luggage."

However, Jim would have none of it and when he pointed out that Sam might freeze solid going over the Rockies, Mully gave in and agreed that he should ride inside the plane.

The next day they took off and after that Sam hardly knew what did happen. Things came so fast that the poor lad got fair dizzy.

The minute they landed at Newark they were raced off by motor car to the grand suite of an hotel in New York. Then the room got full of people who talked to him and talked at him and pinched him and prodded him. Then they asked him to fly.

"Hey, why should all these people see it without paying?" Mully asked.

"This is a publicity stunt," Jim explained. "It's the press. We've got to stir up interest."

So Sam did a few turns round the hotel room, but never saw anything as suspicious as that bunch of New Yorkers. They climbed on chairs and felt for wires; they prodded Sam again to see if anything was fastened to him; they asked Mully to leave the room so she couldn't possibly hypnotise them, and finally they asked Sam to take his clothes off and fly so they could see there was no trickery, like a little motor in the seat of his breeches.

This was too much for Mully.

"Ah will not leave this room," she said, stoutly, "and if ye think ma owd man's off to fly round naked as the day he was born, well ye're all bahn to hev another think cooming. Now put that in your pipes and smoak it."

They went out and more people came and Sam flew around for them. Doctors tapped his chest and tested his metabolism and took his blood pressure; psychologists asked him if a ton of feathers were lighter than a ton of lead; he was examined by a hypnotist, an alienist and a committee on psychic research.

Then the photographers started, taking pictures of Sam standing and Sam flying and Sam looping the loop and the room got so full of smoke that Sam could hardly breathe. So finally he escaped into the bedroom. There he saw a little old man sitting on the bed.

"Nah lad," Sam greeted.

"How do you do," the old man said, courteously.

"Well, that were a good show Ah put on for 'em," Sam said. "But Ah'm rare fagged out."

"It was a good show," the old man said. "But they won't believe it."

"Won't believe it?"

"No, alas! The cheap, modern education of the scientific world abhors that which surpasses its factual knowledge. So your newspapermen will write all about mass hypnotism and wires and Barnum and auto-suggestion. They'll use lots of phrases they don't understand about matters they can't comprehend. They'll find any excuse but the simple truth—that you are capable of levitation—in other words, that you can fly."

"Ah can that," Sam said.

"Of course you can," the old man said, gently.

"Thank you kindly," Sam said. "Here have a pipe o' my baccy. It's varry good. And what did tha say thy name was?"

"Oh, it's just a string of vowels and consonants," the old man said, stuffing his pipe with Sam's tobacco. "You wouldn't be interested. I'm just a student, that's all, at the Research Centre. I'm trying to find out how to defeat the rebellion of man's body and brain against modern life, modern cities, modern foods and modern thoughts. Why is cancer growing, mental ills? Why do cells multiply malignantly?"

He lit his pipe slowly and looked at Sam fondly.

"Now you! I am still sitting in wonder that I should have the luck to be alive in an age when you should manifest yourself again."

"Again?"

"Yes. Are you becoming rarer? Will this age develop more of you? We've had you before, you know—Dacdalus, Icarus. They could fly, too."

"Then Ah'm not the first?" Sam asked.

The old man shook his head.

"Lots of you," he said. "You have been excommunicated and tortured, drowned and burned at the stake as wizards and vampires and incubi and succubi. All because the world is weak and ignorant and—human. And I, too, am human. I wish to circle your life, observe you, make a laboratory specimen of you. But I won't. I'd just like to ask one question."

"Nay lad, Ah've been axed soa mony another wean't hurt."

"Tell me, do you find it harder flying at some times than at others?"

"Nay lad," Sam said. "Well, Ah like best flying alone and outdoors. . . ."

"At night?"

"Aye, at neight. That's reight. And it does get a bit hard for me when people's around. Like this afternoon—it were like the air were varry sticky and soft and a bit harder to get through."

The old man nodded and puffed his pipe. Then he got up and patted Sam on the shoulder.

"It has been a rare privilege to talk to you, Mr. Small," he said. "I wish I could protect you, but I can't. You see, the world will do anything but believe. Although they see, they won't believe.

"Even back when the world was much simpler, they wouldn't. They tried to explain it within their knowledge. When Icarus went soaring into the blue and kept on flying away from their disbelief and never came back, they said undoubtedly his wax wings had melted because he'd flown so high he was too near the sun."

"Why, the higher up tha goas t'colder it is," Sam said, soberly. "That would set wax even harder."

"Undoubtedly. But the explanation satisfied them within their limited knowledge. And so, even to-day, man will get an explanation to satisfy him within our present limited knowledge. To-day that knowledge is even more fiercely narrowed

Mully stepped forward with her eyes shut. She felt the air rushing past her. It was a sweet, glorious flow of air. She opened her eyes, then she smiled; because there was Sam beside her, the tips of his fingers touching hers and they were swinging around in a big circle

between the bits of misinformation we scientists have predigested for man. And you—poor, lonesome Icarus, returning through the centuries, arrive at a world in which the more we prove the less people believe.

"For you have come back to a world where biologists prove virgin birth; chemists can turn water into wine; doctors with insulin raise men from the dead; surgeons perform miracles; electricians make telepathy practical; scientists prove matter lives forever and mathematicians show that the hereafter in time and space is indisputable. And all this in a world that no longer believes in the virgin birth, miracles, telepathy and the hereafter. The more we prove, the less the rational mind believes.

"There is no more faith, simple and blessed. For the world has had too much proof and too much logic—and in getting them we have lost the faculty of having faith in the incomprehensible."

"That's funny," Sam said. "It were a sermon on Faith that started me out flying, as you might say."

"Of course," the old man said.

"Nay, Ah doan't care what they believe," Sam said. "Ah know Ah can fly, doan't Ah?"

"Yes, Mr. Small. But don't you see that their disbelief could . . . well. No, I cannot interfere. I must not do any more harm to the world. You must go on alone—but just one thing. If at any time . . . if you find it gets harder than usual . . . just say to yourself: 'I can fly. I can! I *can*!' and don't ever disbelieve it."

And the little old man pattered away.

Sam hadn't much time to think of what the little man had said, for his days were full of other cycles of doctors and reporters and agents and psychiatrists and photographers. Then, as suddenly as a clap of thunder on a summer day in Cumberland, the big night possessed him and he was in a dressing room and Mully was handing him a bunch of spangles and a few inches of silk.

"Ah will net wear it!" Sam raved.

"What, after all t'bother Ah hed makking it! Tha'll wear it or Ah'll know why."

"Eigh Mully, Ah'd lewk like one o' Tetley's Brewery horses at the Sunday School feast," Sam protested. "What is it?"

"Ah embroidered it," Mully said. "Sitha, there's a Union Jack on thy right chest, and a Stars and Stripes on 't'left, out o' courtesy, as you might say. Now coom on, lad, put it on just to please ma."

So Sam looked at Mully and felt that sorry about her sitting up nights doing the embroidery, that he put on the costume. When Mully came back he saw how his backside looked in the mirror.

"Eigh, Mully," he groaned, "Ah lewk like t'lad on t'flying trapeze, Ah do, for a fact."

"Well, tha couldn't expect to go out there flying around in thy best serge suit," Mully said. "And it's ovver late to change thy mind now—change thy su-it and tha'll be sure to rue it," she quoted.

"Well, Ah changed me suit already," Sam pointed out. "And that's bad luck reight off."

But they had no chance to argue. Jim came rushing in and dragged Sam down to the entrance. They went through corridors and Sam felt just like a bullock going down the chutes in that Chicago slaughter-house trip.

Jim held him by the doorway and Sam could hear the loud-speaker systems announcing him.

"Now you're sure you can do it?" Jim asked. "Because there's the biggest crowd the garden ever had—at a twenty-two dollar top, too. You won't miss out?"

"Of course not," Sam said, irritably.

Then he was being pushed out, and there stood Sam Small, dressed in pink fleshings all embroidered up, and his white moustache jutting out. He stood dazed a minute, staring at the lights and blinking. He put out his arms to take off, and then, suddenly, he began to think of what would happen if he didn't fly.

There he stood, down in the middle of the enormous building, a funny little figure in pink silk and spangles, with his arms out and his jutting white moustache echoing the arms, parallel. Terror seized him and he stood still. For the thousands of people had begun to laugh. That laugh boomed and echoed and gathered until the whole place rang with it and laugh echoes bumped into new laughs and strange over-tone laughs were thus created that no one had given birth to.

Poor Sam stood wishing the earth would swallow him. He was so struck with stage-fright that he turned to run away. But Jim stood in the doorway, waving and motioning frantically.

"For God's sake—go on and fly," Jim shouted.

Sam turned, and putting his arms out again, got ready to take off. But his arms seemed heavy.

He was gripped by a horror. Perhaps it had all been a dream heretofore—and now perhaps he couldn't fly at all.

He was seized with panic, and he ran forward a few steps with his arms out, attempting to get the feel of the air. But it was like being paralysed. He couldn't feel the air. He knew it would never hold him. Something was holding him down.

So he ran and ran with his arms out—and that's what the people saw: a funny little man running round like a chicken—a man attempting to fly.

And they laughed and roared, and the harder they laughed the faster Sam ran and hopped. He jumped and skipped until he was almost dead of exhaustion, and then he stopped, knowing he was hearing a different sound. The people were booing and roaring with anger. He looked up and saw programmes and newspapers sailing through the air.

In a half-daze, he felt himself being hurried and dragged along the corridor. He had cinema-like sensations of policemen drawing their clubs and pushing people back. And then he was in the dressing-room again, and Mully was beside him and Jim was looking into his eyes.

"It's all reight," Sam said, thickly. "Gi' 'em all their brass back again. Ah'll pay for the hall and everything if it tak's ivvery penny us has got."

Jim stood up.

"All right, Mr. Small," he said. "I don't want you to feel bad."

"That's nice, lad," Sam said. "Hurry away and tell t' folk they can have their money back."

Then Sam sat alone with Mully, and she looked at him.

"Ah suppose tha's mad at ma," he said.

"Nay, lad," she said. "Ah'm not mad, but tha did lewk a bit funny out there, hopping around. Go on and change thy clothes, and let's nivver say no moar about flying again."

Then she went out and Sam changed his clothes.

"Happen Ah only dreamt Ah could fly," he said to himself. Sadly, he got dressed. What hurt him more than anything else was the way Mully had looked at him. She would never again have faith in him. Faith! But that had started the whole thing!

Then it happened. Just as Sam was pulling on his breeches he remembered the little man—the little professor with the beard, saying: "Say to yourself: 'I can fly! I can! I *can*!' and don't ever disbelieve it.'"

Quick as a flash, Sam slipped his braces over his shoulders, and in one breath yelled:

"And by Gow, Ah *can* fly. Oppen that door!"

As the door opened, he took off and went out over the heads of the policemen, who ducked and fell flat to get out of the way of his soaring body.

He shot down the corridor over the heads of the people, and then zoomed out into the great auditorium.

"Ah'll show ye!" he yelled.

He raced up in a tremendous climb and looped over so his belly almost brushed the ceiling. Down below most of the people had gone home, but he saw a small knot, faces white in the lights as they stared up at him in disbelief.

"Ah'll show ye, ye blighters," he yelled, and he shot down at them like a plane in a power dive. They scattered in terror and fell over themselves, and Sam streaked away for the entrance. He screamed over the heads of the jammed crowd and shot out into the street.

"Now, can Ah fly?" he shouted, and he looped and zoomed and dived in the night, streaking past lighted windows, skimming over taxies and the heads of people, shooting up to the tops of the houses.

Lightly he perched on a roof, and watched the scene below. Taxies smashed into each other and

(*please turn over*)

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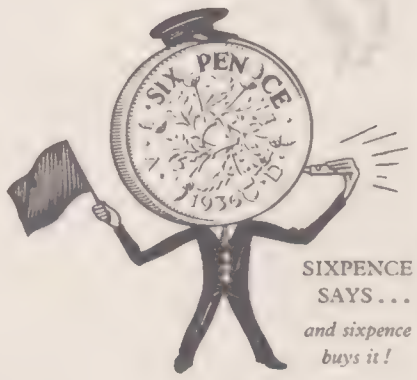

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people grouped round women who had fainted. Police whistles blew, sirens screeched as police cars and ambulances and fire engines raced up.

He heard people yelling at him and saw, below, the white mass of their faces. The fire apparatus began to raise a ladder.

"Come down off there, or you'll break your damned neck," a policeman shouted.

"Ah'll show ye," chanted Sam.

"O.K., tough guy," the policeman said. He started up the fire ladder, his gun in his hand.

Sam advanced one foot off the parapet, and then stepped out. Women screamed and collapsed. But Sam merely laughed. He flipped over, did a slow spiral round the fire ladder and suddenly shot down at the crowd. At the last second he banked up again a few hundred feet.

Then he swooped again and raced along over their heads. He tore up through the city, he zoomed round Broadway and floated up the side of the *Times* building. He shot along the streets, leaving tangles of traffic in his wake.

Then, suddenly, his anger left him, and, feeling weary of all the people, he circled slowly, up, up into the night, until the city was a spangle of lights down below. He could hear only faintly, now, the roar of the metropolis. Beneath him was an island, a lace of light; the shimmering strands were streets, the delicate filaments of fiery beads were bridges over rivers, the crawling glow-worms were ships in the harbour, the incandescent little caterpillar that inched along far away, was a train. In the majestic blackness, far above the city, there was nothing to share the purity of the lonesomeness with Sam except the drone of an aeroplane, far to the south in the vast night sky.

The music on his face brought him sad calm and then sanity. He glided down slowly towards the city. He looked over it in wonder and confusion. And as he did so all his native caution came back.

"Eigh now, Sam Small," he said to himself. "Tha has gone and done it. How in the blooming hell is'ta off to find out where tha lives."

He looked down, but not knowing New York, all the streets looked alike. He had only a vague idea that one of the tall buildings below must be his hotel. But they all looked the same. Sadly he flew up and down, but he knew he couldn't recognise his hotel even if he saw it.

"Eigh, what a dew. Ah wish Ah were home i' Yorksha," he said.

Disconsolately, he flew around until he saw a roof that looked fairly comfortable. It was a sort of projecting roof that had a little lawn and a fountain and, best of all, a porchswing.

"Eigh, gardins way up on top o' buildings," Sam said. "What an idea! However, lad, here's a soft place to kip, and 't first thing i' t' morning, tha can get down quietly and find out where tha lives."

When Sam woke he found the sun shining brightly on his face and a policeman holding his arm.

"By gum, Ah maun o' overslept," Sam said.

"Now, how did you get up here?" the policeman asked.

"Why, Ah flew up, lad," Sam said, honestly.

At this a woman in the background, standing by the penthouse door, gave a scream:

"The bat man!" she yelled, and then fainted dead away.

"So, I've got you," the cop said, drawing his gun. "And don't you try any flying tricks on me to escape."

But the minute Sam saw the gun he decided. He was sick to death of the whole silly business, so he shot straight up in the air twenty feet, went over the edge of that building and raced away in a power dive. It was so fast that the cop had only time to take six wild shots. Sam heard them banging behind him and felt the bullets tearing through the air—for he had become so sensitively attuned to air vibrations that he could feel even the rip of a bullet that was not near at all.

The bullets scared Sam very badly, and made his heart flutter so fast that he had to stop and rest. He came to rest on a convenient parapet. He had perched there for only a minute, when he heard a sound behind him. He turned and saw a nice-looking young lady, naked as the day she was born, taking a sunbath on a mattress.

"Hoops, ma'am," Sam said, turning away politely. "Ah'm right sorry Ah interrupted."

The woman gave a scream and fainted away, too. Sam perched there, scratching his head and wondering whether or not he should get help, when the woman's husband came racing out with a shotgun and began blazing away.

"Drat ma buttons," Sam said, "They maun think Ah'm a cock-partridge or summat and this is t' open season."

Of course, he was thinking that as he flew, because he was going away from the sunbathing lady at top speed.

That morning was something for a man to remember. Every time Sam came down to land, the people below began yelling:

"The bat man—the bat man," and they raced up the streets keeping Sam in sight. All Sam wanted to do was to land and find his hotel, but each time he got near the earth the people crowded and clutched at him and traffic stopped and there was no chance for him to slip down unobserved.

"Ba gum, Ah'm fair sick o' this," Sam moaned.

He flew up again and finally came to rest on one of the gargoyles of the Chrysler Building. Even then there was no rest, for people opened the windows and stared at him and shouted. As the morning went on they began to run sightseeing aeroplanes past the tower and people inside shouted to Sam and begged him just to do a little bit of flight for them.

Then there was a stir on a balcony below him and a policeman shouted to him to come down.

But by this time Sam had lost his age-long respect for the majesty of the blue uniform.

"Now, lad," he warned, "if tha climbs up here Ah'll just fly away to some other building and tha'll have it to do all over again. Ah'm staying where Ah am, and the only person Ah want to talk to is ma Mully. Fetch Mully here and Ah'll talk to her. Ah'm fair sick of all this, Ah am. Ah'm right sick of it, Ah might almost say. So tak thysen and thy gun away and fetch Mully here."

Sam hopped off and flew a little higher, until he was sitting right against the pole on the spire on the Chrysler Building.

And there he sat, hour after hour, until it was late afternoon. They tried to coax him down, but Sam had his Yorkshire up and was just stubborn and set that he wouldn't come down till they brought Mully.

Finally, there was a shout below, and Sam saw Mully's bonnet showing up on a little bit of a balcony. She came climbing up and Sam flew down and gave her a bit of a hand until they were both on a ledge, snug as could be. Mully stared at him and almost got tearful for a moment.

"Eigh, Sam," she said. "In thy shirt-sleeves all night, perched up here like a cock-sparrer. Tha maught ha' caught thy death o' cold."

"Mully," Sam pleaded, "now doan't start in plaguing ma. Help ma gate out o' this mess, and s'welp me bob, Ah'll nevver lift ma two feet off the ground together again. These bobbies hev been shooting at ma. Tell 'em Ah nobbut want to get down and goa on hoam to Yorksha again."

"Nay, lad," Mully said. "Tha's put thy foot on it and there's owd Nick popping below."

"What's up now?"

"What ain't up," she said. "Tha hasn't awf done it, now. Tha's tangled the city up. There's been dozens killed in traffic accidents from people staring at thee. A skyscraper company has offered a hundred pounds a day if tha'll just light on their flagpole once a day."

"Nivver heed that, lass. Let's get down fro' here and get away."

"Nay, lad. Tha's started summat. Tha sees, Sam, tha's upset things. People are suing thee for damages and Ah doan't knaw what."

"Oooah, dratma buttons," Sam moaned.

"That's not awf on it," Mully said. "One awf o' t' city wants thee shot as a bat man, and scientists say tha can't be true, and ministers say tha maun be a devil, and ivvery woman i' t' city is barring her windows. Tha's a menace, that's what tha is. They hed to call off all t' schools, for mothers is flaid tha'll fly away wi' their bairns. Police want to lock thee up because tha could rob ivvery skyscraper i' t' city at neight, by flying i' windows.

"Them that doan't think tha should be shot want thee deported as an undesirable alien, and just as mony folk want thee kept here behind bars."

"What on earth for?"

"Well, tha can fly, lad. Why, one chap wi' slant eyes offered ma a hundred million dollars if Ah'd gate thee to goa to his country."

"What for?"

"Why, soa tha can teach his army how to fly, then they could strap a bomb on every sojer, and the whole army could fly on its own hook ovver any city in' t' world and bomb it to pieces and then land and capture it wi-out trouble."

"Ma gum," Sam said, "that's so! If there was an army of chaps could fly like me we could conquer t' whole world. What did'ta tell him?"

"Why, Ah told him straight that tha were a Britisher, and if any army is off to have men that can fly on their own hook

Seven Ages of Make-up

THERE is nothing new about woman's addiction to cosmetics. It's as old as civilisation itself. Cleopatra was so fond of "making-up" she would have put modern "glamour girls" in the shade.

It is a far cry from that remote age to this year of grace, but woman's desire to beautify herself is as great as ever, though the "aids" have changed a good deal.

Looking back over history, the story of make-up can be divided into "Seven Ages" covering a period of about 5,000 years, and the development of the use of cosmetics is to be shown in a special section at Woman's Fair, at Olympia in November.

Beginning with the ancient Egyptians—adept at the art of elaborate hairdressing—one moves on to the long period of the Roman Empire. The women of that great era unashamedly used all manner of cosmetics to attract the male. Great attention was also paid to the hair, and the forerunner of our permanent wave seems to have been evolved about that time.

Through the mediæval period of history extra adornment was in vogue, although for some time it was customary to hide the hair under elaborate head-dresses. During the period of the Renaissance, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a further change, especially in the art of hairdressing, became apparent.

In passing, it is worth telling a story of Catherine de Medici (although it is possibly an invention of malice). It is said that, desiring to remove a troublesome lady-in-waiting, she sent her a present of a pot of lip salve or cosmetic which contained a poison, carefully prepared by Rene the Perfumer. It speedily accomplished its purpose.

The eighteenth century brought the elegant period of "patch and powder," and it is interesting to note how the fashion altered from the heavy wigs of Queen Anne to the neat hairdressing of the Sheridan period of "The School for Scandal."

Then women became suddenly modest. The ladies of the eighteenth century were very careful to conceal any artificial adornments that they considered necessary, but to-day . . .

For instance, when Sarah Bernhardt first visited England, she was entertained to supper by Sir Henry Irving, and quite scandalised the company by making-up with some rouge and lipstick during the conversation. To-day such doings would excite no comment.

Whether the practice of "gilding the lily and adding perfume to the violet" is to be commended or not is a question of opinion.

"Seven Ages of Make-up" at Woman's Fair has been designed to show with the greatest amount of historical accuracy the different fashions of hairdressing and the use of cosmetics through history.

"Ah! Somebody to show my window-box to at last!

it's the British army. But a newspaper chap heard ma say that, and now all the papers demand that they doan't let thee leave this country till tha gives up thy secret."

"Ah have no secret," Sam moaned. "Ah can nobbut fly, that's all."

"Aye, but they doan't know that. Eh lad, tha's upset the whole world. Why, the minute they saw tha could fly, aeroplane stocks all went to bits, and then railroads and boat shares went to bits and steel followed them, because they summed it up that if people could fly they're not off to need any aeroplanes or boats or railroads or motor cars to ride in. It was so tarrible they hed to close up t' markets."

"What did they do that for?" Sam asked. "They still got to buy groceries, hevn't they?"

"Ah don't know sewerly," Mully sighed. "But t' paper said t' President ordered t' markets closed. Then he called a special meeting o' their Parliament, or whativver it is, to pass a bill for new money to build national defences against flying men. In fact, to put it in a nutshell, Sam Small, tha's mucked up the whole world."

"Eigh," Sam moaned, "It were that California that's to blame. It were a balmy climate for fair—it turned me balmy, onyhow. And all Ah ivver wanted, Mully, was to be back hoam i' Yorksha, wi' a good pint o' ale, and a few lads to pass a nice evening wi'—or sitting hoam workin' on a nice rag rug. And now Ah'm in a proper mess."

He perched on the ledge, moodily.

"Well, Mully," he said. "It's ma fault. Go thee down and tak a train for California and stay w' Vinnie. Ah'll take care o' mysen."

"Nay," Mully said, indignantly. "Ah'm noa less to blame than thee, making thee come to foreign countries where a chap gets ideas into his head that's contrary to common sense. So here Ah am, and here Ah stay, wi' thee!"

Sam thought a while, and looked out over the city. The sun still shone where they were, but below it was getting almost shadowy and dusk. Then he looked at Mully decisively.

"Millicent Small," he said. "Dosta luv ma, lass?"

"Nay, lad, doan't talk so soft."

"Ah mean it. It's important. Dosta luv ma?"

At that Mully began to weep—much to Sam's astonishment. Finally she looked up at him.

"Sam Small," she said, finally. "Tha hesn't axed ma that for nigh on twenty years."

"Well, Ah'm a man o' few words," Sam said. "Happen Ah've often thowt about axing thee; but tha knows how a chap is. Soa now, Ah'm axing thee."

Mully sniffed and looked at Sam.

"Sammywell Small," she said, "Ah've stuck by thee for twenty year, Ah have. Ah took thee for better or worse, and happen it were worse than Ah thowt it would be. But still and all. Ah stuck by thee through t' strikes when we didn't have a penny and us popped ma wedding ring to get summat to eat; and Ah nursed thee the time o' they accident i' t' mill; and Ah've put thee to bed when tha's been poorly. Ah've bore thy bairn and washed thy clothes and cooked thy meals and shared thy bed. And then tha axes ma if Ah luv thee. If Ah doan't, lad, then for the last twenty year Ah've been living under false pretences."

"That's all Ah want to hear," Sam said.

He got up and squared his shoulders.

"Now put thy hand in mine," he said, "and don't be flaid. Just have faith in me, that's all."

Mully got up and looked down at the evening streets, hymenopterous with humans, far, far below.

"Eigh, lad, there's off to be a hell of a splash if tha mak's a mistake," she said.

But she put her hand in his.

"Awf a minute, Sam," she said. "Happen this'll work, happen not. But if it doan't, there's one question that's been burning ma for a long time."

"Fire away, lass."

"Well—Sam—did'ta really have owt to do wi' that widow i' Harrogate that summer we went there on us holidays?"

"Mully," Sam said, "true as us is facing ower Maker reight now, there's nivver been nub'dy but thee."

Mully looked at him a second, then she tied the strings of her bonnet tighter.

"That's all Ah wanted to hear thee say, lad," she said.

She put her hand in his again.

"Count three for me, lad."

"One—" said Sam.

Mully took a deep breath.

"Two—" said Sam.

Mully shut her eyes.

"Just have faith in me," Sam told her.

"All reight," she said. "Ah do believe in thee, Sam."

"Then here we goa! Three!"

Mully stepped forward with her eyes shut. She felt the air rushing past her. It was a sweet, glorious flow of air. She opened her eyes. Then she smiled; because there was Sam right beside her, the tips of his fingers touching hers, and they were swinging around in a big circle, volplaning as smoothly as a couple of albatrosses. And like that, together, they went up and in a great spiral.

And that's the last New York ever saw of them. The people in the buildings, staring out, and the black crowds far below on the streets, craning their necks backwards, could see that twin flight of two bodies, near to each other, matching their movements with the telepathic exactitude of birds, going up and up until they were dots against the washed sadness of the evening sky—up and up until they could be seen no more. And thus it was that Sam and Mully Small escaped New York and flew back to Yorkshire and settled down again.

And if you ever go to Yorkshire and get to a place called Polkingthorpe Bridge, near Huddersfield, you can test this story. Any evening you wish you can go down to the *Spread Eagle*, and there, with a pint of nice ale before him, a blazing fire behind him, and a handful of chums beside him, you'll find a chap named Sam Small.

He's been all round the world. He has a wife named Mully. He has a daughter named Vinnie, in the movies, who was married not long ago to a young American chap named Jim McGillicuddy.

But it's no use asking him if he can fly. Because if you do he'll look you straight in the eye and say:

"Nay, lad, that's not me. Tha maun be thinking o' t' other Sam Small—the chap what dropped his musket and held up t' battle o' Waterloo."

THE END

Cash-Saving Cooking

IF you have not yet applied for "MODERN COOKERY ILLUSTRATED," you must act quickly. The Final Reservation Forms appeared in last week's issue of THE PASSING SHOW, and must be received by not later than Tuesday next, August 30.

"MODERN COOKERY ILLUSTRATED" has been specially compiled and edited by one of the most famous practical cookery experts of our age—LYDIA CHATTERTON—and shows housewives how to keep the family happy and healthy with nourishing and appetising meals, and at the same time save hard cash.

See what it contains! *Over 2,000 money-saving, tested recipes, thousands of valuable cookery secrets, hints and tips, 640 large pages, nearly 400,000 words, and scores and scores of "how-to-do-it" photographs, charts and diagrams.*

"MODERN COOKERY ILLUSTRATED" can be yours at an amazingly low privilege Presentation Price. Look up the final Reservation Forms in the special announcement in last week's PASSING SHOW and post them at once. Remember, they must be received by not later than Tuesday next, August 30.

A 'plus' dog is never finicky about his food

"KEEN ON HIS MEALS AGAIN"

"My dog was a 'bad doer' and a nuisance to feed," writes Mrs. R. O. of Holyhead. "I have seen him refuse good beef, preferring to go without until he could have some tasty liver. I started giving him Bob Martin's, and a few days later I was delighted to find him keen on his meals again. He's in great form now."

WHEN YOUR DOG REFUSES THE MEAL you have prepared for him, you are probably annoyed at the thought of good food being wasted. But your dog can't help himself. A poor appetite shows that impurities in your dog's blood have made his stomach sour. Whenever the weather warms up, these impurities are aggravated, and unless they are removed your dog may fall a victim to blood disorders far more serious than loss of appetite.

Your dog cannot rid himself of blood impurities by perspiring, because there are *no pores in his skin*. Nature's way to keep him in condition is to provide blood correctives among certain wild grasses. But these are beyond your dog's reach, and in their place you should provide him with Bob Martin's Condition Powders, which contain the natural blood correctives he needs.

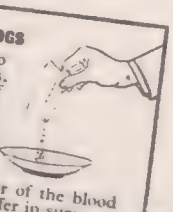
'PLUS' DOGS ARE NEVER OFF THEIR FOOD

Because his blood is kept pure by Bob Martin's Condition Powders, a 'plus' dog always has a healthy appetite. These famous powders prevent and cure all the common blood disorders such as scratching, listlessness, sour breath, loss of appetite, loose coat and eczema. The result of regular Bob Martin's is that dogs enjoy a life of constant health and happiness.

MAKE YOUR DOG A 'PLUS' DOG

Begin now to give your dog his 'one Bob Martin's once a day'. In a very short time he'll reach a wonderful new level of fitness. He'll be a finer, friendlier companion — with better health, better coat, better spirits. He'll be a 'plus' dog.

DANGER MONTHS FOR DOGS



All dogs are subject to overheating on warm days. If your dog is out of condition, this sudden overheating will aggravate the impurities which have collected in his blood. Before you can act he may go down with one or other of the blood disorders so many dogs suffer in summer. Prevent hot weather risks! Put your dog right *now* with a course of Bob Martin's Condition Powders (full directions in every packet), and then *keep* him a 'plus' dog with 'one Bob Martin's once a day'. In packets, 6d. and 1/- from all chemists and dog-food shops.

to keep dogs fit the *'plus'* dog way

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VIRGINIA HALL'S PAGE

WE have had off-white, off-pink and off-almost-every-other-colour; now we have off-black for the autumn. It's very attractive, but rather difficult to describe.

At the showing of dresses where it was introduced, it made me think of dark elephants, cinders, iron-filings and gun-metal. None of these sounds attractive, but they indicate, roughly, the colour. You may think it looks dusty, but it doesn't and it provides a grand background for brightly coloured accessories. It will become most of us, too.

Pipings seem to be a favourite trimming of models in this particular house. A number of the frocks and jackets were cut on princess lines, the seams being piped with a contrasting colour, or in some cases two or three contrasting colours, as in the illustration on this page, which was of this new off-black, softest angora material, with pipings of magenta and lime green.

Pyjama in the Autumn

One attractive suit was in a deep brown, a very plain skirt and a very well-fitting jacket with each seam—and there were about six or seven of them—piped in powder blue. The bottom of the jacket was scalloped between each seam, and it was lined in blue to match the piping.

I must tell you of an amusing coat I saw at this show. It was of black, fairly thick wool material, plainly made, belted so that it gathered round the waist. The cutest part of it was the little hood which fell down the back and which the mannequin pulled over her blonde curls and buttoned close round her throat, rather like a racing helmet. Grand for motoring in an open car.

★ Readers have written asking how they can make pot-pourri, so for those of you who want to make some from your last roses of summer, here are two methods.

The first is for moist pot-pourri. Gather a peck of rose petals on a hot day when they are perfectly dry. Put them in a pan and cover with ¾lb. salt. Leave for a week, then mix in ½ lb. bay salt and the same quantity of spice, cloves and brown sugar. Add ¼ lb. gum benzoin, 2 ozs. powdered orris root and 1 gill cooking brandy, then an assortment of fragrant flowers and leaves such as mock orange, lavender, verbena, rosemary, thyme, mint, balm and bay. All these must be absolutely bone-dry. Stir the mixture thoroughly and keep in a covered jar. If it becomes too dry, it can be moistened with a little brandy.

To make dry pot-pourri, dry a quantity of roseleaves and other sweet-smelling flowers in the sun for a day. Put a layer of flower petals in a large jar, sprinkle with common salt to which a little bay-salt and saltpetre have been added, then put in another layer of flower petals and a layer of salt, and so on alternately until the jar is full.

Stir every day for a week, then add a little powdered orris root, a few ground cloves and some orange peel dried in the oven and crushed to powder. Keep the jar tightly covered.

★ One thing all film stars have in common is good teeth. Can you think of even one who hasn't? They realise far better than most of us that the charm of a smile is more than doubled if it shows a set of sparkling teeth.

Can you say the same of yourself? Next time you look in your mirror switch on a smile, and see how *that* looks. For don't forget that when you're trying to be your best, trying to make a good impression, the betting is that you'll be smiling and that smile should light up your face. But does it? Or are you conscious that it lacks the brightness it should have because your teeth have a dingy look.

If you must admit to yourself that your teeth could be brighter and whiter, then let me tell you how to make them that way.

There is a tooth powder on the market now which contains a new ingredient with wonderful cleansing properties. It will make your teeth more sparkling and lovely than ever before—and quickly. If you want to find out for yourselves just how much nice white teeth will add to the attraction of your smile, write to me and I will have a sample of the tooth powder containing this wonder ingredient sent to you free. Just send a postcard, giving me your name and address and marking it "Smile" and I'll send you something to smile about.

★ Some weeks ago I was asked to go out to dinner and on to a theatre. I was told not to change. Now I felt that I wanted a small smart hat, but I certainly didn't want to pay very much for one that I would very likely wear only a few times. So I took myself to Woolworth's where I bought three fairly large black organdie poppylike flowers and a yard of black velvet ribbon. I took this lot home in their brown paper bag, found a small piece of black taffeta in my "pieces" of which I made a triangle each side measuring about 4½ inches.

I mounted my three flowers on this triangle of silk and my theatre hat was made. I just tied that trio of black flowers on to my head with the black velvet ribbon, so that one flower tilted over one eye and the other two were straight across the top of my head and the velvet bow at the nape of my neck.

That hat was a great success and since then I've worn it at a couple of cocktail parties and a wedding.

But that's not quite the end of the story, for I wear those flowers in another guise. I had a flat, white hat and I was tired of its plain black band. So I ripped the ribbon off and cut a tiny slit in the straw at each side, just where the crown and brim met. Through these slits I slip the black velvet ends of my theatre hat, so that the flowers completely cover the crown of the white hat and tie the ends at the back of my head—and there I have another hat.

★ A film called "The Young in Heart" is being made by David O Selznick in Hollywood. The title of the film led its three stars, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., Janet Gaynor and Paulette Goddard on to a discussion: which ten women in the world would you instance as most representative of the spirit of youth, beauty and achievement?

Here is a list that young Fairbanks gave—shocking his companions by not mentioning one Hollywood star.

H.R.H. Duchess of Kent; Jean Batten, the Australian flier; Helen Wills Moody; Eve Curie, French author of a biography of her famous mother; Mrs. Harrison Williams, American society woman, often called the world's best-dressed woman; H.H. Princess Sita of Kapurthala, whose husband rules over India's largest and wealthiest state; Mrs. Williams Rhinelander Stewart, known as New York's prize blonde beauty; Princess Ingrid of Sweden; Helen Jacobs; and Lady Diana Duff-Cooper.

Do you agree with him?

If you are interested in any of the things mentioned in these pages, please write to Virginia Hall, c/o "The Passing Show," 92 Long Acre, W.C.2, for she is very willing to help

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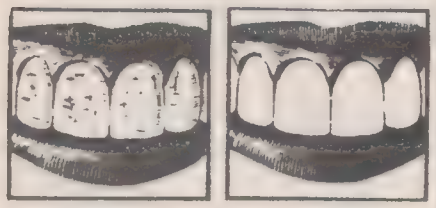

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WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY

SAM KILLICK, a journalist, is describing what happened while he was a member of a cruising party sailing the southern seas in the yacht, *Solar Star*, which was in the charge of

CAPTAIN JOHN BARLEY, when all laws of navigation were upset by a storm that wrecked the yacht's radio and disabled her engines. Meanwhile

JAMES HENRY WENDERBY, owner of the *Solar Star*, and his friend

"TINY" MILTON and Wenderby's cousin,

GEORGE THORMANSON, are surprised when a 'plane lands to leeward of the yacht, revealing lovely

SALLY ALTON, noted girl flier and her secretary,

NINA LENNOX. Eventually the *Solar Star* drifts to the Antarctic continent where they find themselves in Ooloom, a lost country rich in diamonds and inhabited by giants who communicate to each other by telepathy. Thormanson is attempting to steal some of the diamonds but the rest of the party are trying to stop him, having been warned by the Ooloomians that great danger threatens anybody who touches them.

NOT a human figure was in sight as we walked on down the road towards the first series of caves. Thormanson and his friends had a start of about two hours, so that we could not hope to come up with them for some time. It was not exactly Thormanson for whom we sought just then, but one of the giants who could tell us what was happening. We stopped several times along the ancient road to search the horizon for just a glimpse of a shepherd, but there was no sign of man or beast anywhere. The silence over Ooloom was intense, uncanny and threatened to become an obsession, as we journeyed on down the deserted road.

"Where is everybody hiding around here?" Jimmy complained, at last. "There's a mystery somewhere."

"We'll see and hear plenty at the first series of caves," Tiny said, confidently. "I expect they all went to earth after receiving my warning."

But when we arrived at the entrance to the women's quarters we found nobody

WORLD WITHOUT TIME

BY W. J. PASSINGHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY T. GRAINGER JEFFREY

The ancient Evil of Ooloom was free and rampant once again—free to work its will among men, in the person of George Thormanson

there. The caves inside were deserted and for the first time, Tiny Milton looked apprehensive. I think he was more than disappointed at the absence of Aaneen. We did not, could not, stay there in the threatening silence and sinister atmosphere of the caves. Everything had been left in perfect order, of course, and only the inhabitants were missing, but the atmosphere of suspense—of uneasiness, became intolerable after a time. Tiny Milton, who knew this particular set of caves better than any of us, could find no clue to the whereabouts of the Ooloomians.

"It beats me," he said, anxiously. "This disappearing act is just another of their secrets, I suppose."

"There's no need to worry over it," I said. "These rocks are as full of hiding-places as a sponge and the women have probably retreated where they can't be found."

"It's a general retreat, anyway," Jimmy Wenderby observed, in wonder. "Not one has been left behind."

Slowly we made our way out of the women's quarters, satisfied that Thormanson and his friends had never visited them.

"George will make straight for the diamond mine," Jimmy decided. "We'd better hurry if we're to be in time to help the Ooloomians."

So we hurried on the way to the next series of caves, through a country deserted and silent, and at last came to the great cavern which covered that mysterious pool of blue water known as the "Mirror of Truth." Not a living thing moved in this vast place, neither was there any sound save that of our echoing footsteps. At the brink of the pool I stood for a few moments staring down into the blue water. It may have been my imagination but as I stared I seemed to see a picture of the "Mouth of Ooloom" on the surface of the pool. He was smiling reassuringly and before I could make up my mind about the reality, Tiny Milton's voice urged me on out of the cave to continue our journey.

As we went on down the road, a sense of approaching danger grew steadily within me at every step towards the picture caves in the distance, until at last I could hide my misgivings no longer.

"Look here," I said, at last. "I have a strong feeling that George and his gang are only just ahead of us. He's probably resting in the caves down there. If we're not careful. . . ."

"Oh, I'll take care of George," Tiny answered savagely and shifted his grip on the rifle held in the crook of his arm.

"Don't overlook the fact that we're chasing five men better armed than ourselves, Tiny," I warned. "I was going to suggest that you try another experiment in mental telepathy. It certainly helped us out of trouble when we were lost in the forest."

Tiny smiled at me. "I can't tell you how I know," he answered, "but I'm certain it isn't necessary, Sam. We'll meet Aaneen soon enough."

When we arrived at the entrance to the picture-caves I insisted on taking the lead, fearing what Tiny Milton might do to get back at Thormanson if we all happened to meet. So I left the others standing outside while I went forward to investigate. Hardly had I left the daylight and entered the shadows than I heard the first sounds—the sounds of human voices conversing somewhere among the maze of caves which form the finest dormitories in Ooloom. Cautiously I crept back to inform the others.

"This is where the fireworks begin, boys," I said grimly. "George and his men are here talking things over. Now let's go easy! Remember they can outshoot as well as outnumber us."

"And they haven't the slightest idea we're on their tail," Tiny added, as he followed me into the semi-darkness.

"What happens when we all meet?" asked Jimmy Wenderby, dubiously. "Do we shoot it out?"

"Shoot nothing!" I said, softly. "Our one chance here is to get ahead of them, and lay an ambush. I know these caves better than Thormanson."

Before the other two could prevent it, I was creeping swiftly away through the caves towards the passage which opened into the cave of pictures and I remembered every inch of the way. I had reached the beginning of this passage when I saw the narrow entrance to that apartment where I had first met the aged patriarch known as the "Mouth of Ooloom." In that moment I knew we had found the ideal position for a surprise attack. Thormanson and his friends were bound to pass this way to reach the cave of pictures—which was the only way we knew to the temple. I looked round inquiringly at Tiny and he nodded.

"This is the spot, Sam," he agreed and we entered the cave to see the small platform on which the aged patriarch was wont to sit when he was at home.

Jimmy Wenderby elected to watch the passage for the approach of Thormanson, while Tiny and I discussed our plans.

"Tiny," I warned, "we can't shoot at these people in cold blood. It would be murder. Use the other end of your rifle, and lay out as many as you can before they know we're about here."

"Sure," he said. "I never meant to do anything else, unless they threaten to shoot us—which I think they will do without any hesitation. It's not that point I'm worrying about at the moment. Where have all the big people gone? We haven't seen a sign of one yet."

"Search me," I said, softly. "They've a perfect hideout somewhere, and I don't blame 'em for keeping to it." Hardly had I uttered these sentiments before a curious cracking sound brought us round with a rush to see part of the solid floor at the back of the small platform rising very, very slowly. We watched, with bated breath, the huge slab of rock moving inch by inch and the very slowness of its movement told us that an Ooloomian must be responsible.

If George Thormanson came along the passage just now at least one precious secret in this place would be revealed to the enemy! It was trying work waiting for the stone to be raised, and listening for sounds outside in the passage. Presently the slab was lifted right back to reveal the smiling features of our old friend Eenoon. His great hand was beginning to make a gesture of welcome when I realised what was meant by his appearance there.

"Jimmy!" I called, softly. "Jimmy! This way!"

As Eenoon's head began slowly to descend we were at the edge of the hole and squeezing our way past his giant's body down a rough set of stone steps hollowed and pitted with age. It was but a short way down to the lower level—and there in the dim light stood Aaneen. But her eyes were looking past me to Tiny Milton, her shapely arms already rising to welcome him to safety. Tiny was a big, heavy fellow among his own people, but quite a small man compared with the Ooloomian giants. When they embraced it was like a mother caressing her child. A strange pair to fall in love! My fears grew every time I saw them together. How would it end?

Behind Aaneen stood another giant whose arm was outstretched and waiting to grip me the moment I drew level with him, and when I peered upward I recog-

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RADIOLYMPIA WHAT'S WHAT

RELIABLE everyday television at a price we can all afford, and sound radio sets that you tune merely by touching a button are the twin pieces of practical magic you can inspect at Radiolympia this week and next. You can see a table television receiver giving a postcard size picture at £25. You can see a sound receiver with a dozen push-buttons, each capable of bringing in a station if you press it with your finger tip.

Philips have a unique push-button system with "linear" condensers. Special lathes had to be ordered to make the tools for manufacturing these precision components. The result is a robust system that you adjust yourself—and it cannot go wrong. Their television set has a big screen, 18 ins. by 22 ins.

Marconiphone have a similar big screen television set, and also one with a 4¾ ins. by 4 ins. screen, as well as those of medium size. For its size this baby is as effective as the larger models, but naturally fewer people can watch at one time. The Marconiphone push-buttons in some models operate a small electric motor that tunes the set for you, while in others they switch you immediately to the station concerned.

The Bush receivers are all push-button operated; they believe in the new tuning and have backed their belief. Their television is the Baird instruments with which pioneer concern they are connected.

Cossor show television, too. Among automatically tuned receivers they have a novel system which works like a telephone dial. You put your finger in the appropriate opening, turn the dial to the stop, and there is your station.

Ekco were among the earliest to bring out push-button tuning. As well as the ordinary motor-driven type, they have a system of "motor cruising" to find stations. Very big Ekco Scophony television, as well as the normal type, is on show at their stand.

Ferranti are in the general television and push-button field. Their sound radio sets have gained distinction with a very clean looking type of control knob that is transparent—thus permitting generous dimensions without an overweighted appearance.

Ferguson have opened a further factory to produce their new sets. Some of their press-buttons select not only a station but the wave-band as well. All their receivers are all-wave types with 3 to 5 bands.

"Split Second" automatics are H.M.V's. method of tuning in the new style. Pressing the buttons brings new circuits into operation. Their television is in four main sizes, from 5-inch to a 12-inch cathode ray tube.

"Key-Board" tuning is the name Kolster-Brandes give their system. Eight buttons provide a choice of six medium wave stations and two long-wave.

Secret until the last minute before the Show opened, McMichael's line has the usual attractive and reliable products which have built this name. The "Bijon" portable, with its unconventional fret, continues the popular career it started this summer.

For the first time for years, Murphy Radio are at Radiolympia. A glass-panelled television receiver is one of their typically striking instruments. Their sole push-button set does the job thoroughly, bringing in 14 stations and selecting 7 short-wave bands for you.

Pye have got a different angle on things with buttons that glow when pushed, and a feature which they call "Organ Stop Balance Control." Of course, they are taking a prominent part in the television push and have some "quality" television instruments.

In a price-class of their own, R.G.D. produce for the luxury market. Their most luxurious instrument has push-button control of both wavebands and stations; the television screen is 10 ins. by 8 ins.; the gramophone side has an auto-changer. And if you feel really idly rich, this super machine can be operated at a distance. You sit in your armchair and push the buttons on a small panel; only a cable connects you and the auto-radiogramophonic-television-receiver!

nised the "Mouth of Ooloom," himself. Smiling down at me benevolently, he led me away from the others along a dark passage until we reached a much lighter apartment, similar to the one he occupied on the floor above. There was also the same small, wooden platform and, as he sank slowly down upon it, I had time to see that the light came—as it usually did in these caves—through slits high up in the wall.

When I looked down again the aged patriarch was ready for me. I felt his great eyes boring into my own, taking possession of my mind, and I yielded to his influence. His gratitude for our return in the interests of Ooloom was made manifest immediately, but he also feared—feared for George Thormanson! In answer to the question rising in my mind, the patriarch reminded me of my own terrible experience in the passage beyond the cave of diamonds. . . .

I sensed fear again, this time for what Thormanson and his friends might do in the Temple of Ooloom—especially to its wondrous diamond cross. He informed me there were powers at his disposal he was reluctant to exert, since these forces meant annihilation to those against whom they were directed, and I understood that human life was regarded as a sacred thing to the Ooloomians. For these reasons he asked us for our assistance in persuading the invaders to leave Ooloom in peace. I and my friends were better equipped by nature to deal with Thormanson, and to prevent a catastrophe which would affect the Ooloomians gravely. Would we follow a secret road to the temple and try to prevent a party of our own people committing an outrage in such a holy place?

He had my assurance on this point as soon as I had grasped his meaning. It was not necessary to consult my two companions on this question, for we had returned to Ooloom especially to prevent Thormanson stealing diamonds. I sensed his deep gratitude and relief before he released me. When I informed Jim and Tiny of my mental conversation with the patriarch they made their agreement known to him with a wealth of gestures which affected many of the giants standing near us. There were nods and smiles all round, and more than one big fellow bent to kiss my hand until I felt utterly confused and embarrassed.

After a light meal, we were ready for the next adventure and the aged patriarch conducted us down a steep passage. We followed him into utter darkness for several minutes, after which a dim light grew again ahead of us and I saw we were traversing another strange road among the many caves and passages which honeycombed the base of the mountain. Having on a previous occasion made the journey from these caves to the temple above ground, I was surprised how quickly we reached our destination by this underground passage. At its end another flight of worn steps led up to a small chamber, and out of this we entered the temple at a place behind the great diamond cross. This entrance was in deep shadow, and for some reason the red glow which always pervaded the temple failed to penetrate here, so that we were practically invisible to anybody standing on the other side of the blazing diamond symbol suspended from the roof.

We waited there some time before George and his party appeared through the main entrance to the temple. While Thormanson walked on with the confidence born of familiarity, however, the four adventurers from the *Lydenburg* stood awed and hesitant on the threshold. When George pointed to the diamond cross I saw the others come forward as though drawn by a magnet to view the greatest wonder in Ooloom and as they drew nearer their expressions of awe gave place to incredulity.

"God Almighty!" gasped one. "Look at that centre stone! It can't—it couldn't be. . . . ?"

"You bet it is!" George declared. "Have you ever seen such stones before, Reiner?"

"Not of such size," Reiner answered. "Quality is another matter and it's impossible to judge it from this distance. Can't we get the thing down? If those stones are of fine quality their value is incalculable. But look at that centre stone! I've spent a lifetime among diamonds, Thormanson, but never have I seen. . . . How is the cross held in position? There must be a mechanism for lowering it."

"I think you'll find it's suspended by hide thongs and lowered over a kind of pulley-wheel at the back," Thormanson said: "But there'll be plenty of time for this thing after we've inspected the mine. We'll collect it on our return journey. Let's get on. There's a forest between us and the mine, but I was brought back here by a road which runs beside it the whole way."

As he was speaking Thormanson led his friends out of the temple by the main entrance, and once again a profound silence settled down in that vast place.

"What happens now?" Jimmy Wenderby whispered. "Do we follow them?"

"We certainly do," Tiny Milton said. "I simply must see what happens when they come out of the diamond cave."

Before I could say a word against the idea they were running across the temple on the track of George Thormanson. I followed with great reluctance, for the memory of my terrible experience in the cave of diamonds still dominated my thoughts. When I remembered that it would be impossible for us to follow them into the cave without revealing our presence, I felt much easier in my mind.

It was a long and rough road which skirted the forest of Ooloom. We were obliged to keep a considerable distance between ourselves and Thormanson, and nothing occurred on the journey which is worthy of record. Thormanson and his friends were inside the cave long before we could obtain a safe view of it from behind the fringe of great trees on the edge of the forest. I noticed that one of the rifle-men was left outside to guard the narrow cleft below the glacier. . . .

There followed a long period of waiting before they reappeared in the distance, and meanwhile I was consumed with curiosity about what had happened to Thormanson. It was well for our peace of mind just then that my curiosity remained unsatisfied. The fearful Thing from which the spiritual powers of the Ooloomians had saved me was a force that even I did not yet fully understand. All we were concerned with at the moment was reaching the temple without being seen by Thormanson and his friends, and this we accomplished by making a fast journey over that rough road back to the main entrance. We crossed the silent temple at a swift run, and took up our original positions behind the diamond cross—little dreaming of the breathless drama about to begin.

George Thormanson entered the temple at the head of his party and, from the moment I could see his face clearly, I knew—or rather I had an inkling of what now possessed him. His features were set and hard, the mouth tightened to a thin line. The others seemed to have more determination about them now, a grim purpose as they walked on after their leader.

"We must have that centre stone," Reiner declared, gazing up at the diamond cross. "The mine's good enough for anything—a miracle, in fact, but I doubt whether it will ever yield another table diamond like this one. A stone like that is beyond price; a bauble for a man to whom money means nothing. I tell you all that this stone will cause a sensation throughout the world!"

"So you think the mine is worked out?" Thormanson asked.

"I didn't say so." Reiner shrugged his shoulders. "The mine has been worked for centuries, as you saw for yourself. On the other hand, George, it's worth financing, for if only small stuff is left there it must be worth a huge fortune. But that is where a fortune will come for us all!" He pointed upward to the diamond cross as he spoke.

"Just a minute," one of the party objected. "I haven't seen the mine, but I'm prepared to take your word about its value, Reiner. On the other hand, I have enough diamonds in my pockets at this moment to keep me in comfort for the rest of my life. We're all in the same position. Why trouble about. . . .?"

"I'd throw away everything in my pockets twice over for that one big stone in the centre," Reiner insisted.

"Of course," Thormanson agreed. "It's here for the taking. I guess the pulleys are at the back somewhere."

The last sentence was spoken as George walked under the cross into the shadows where we were concealed. There was no time to lose now, and I stepped forward to meet him with a right-hand punch aimed at an angle of the jaw. Surprise had him helpless, but my impulsiveness spoiled my judgment of distance. The blow landed an inch too high, although Thormanson went down heavily under the impact. He let out a wild yell of fear and pain and rolled over and over on the floor under the cross.

Before he could regain his feet a deafening explosion shattered the silence of the temple—awakening a thousand echoes from wall to wall and high up under the lofty roof. A bullet fanned my cheek—smacked into the rock behind me. I dodged behind the wall forming the end of the passage just as Tiny Milton slipped past me into the temple. In a flash, he levelled his rifle and returned the bullet which had so nearly ended my career. A high-pitched scream of pain, the clatter of a rifle dropped upon the stone floor, proclaimed his success, and he was back behind the wall when the crash of the rifles broke out again with deafening effect.

"They can't see us here in the shadows," Tiny Milton whispered fiercely, as he pressed forward beyond the protection of the wall and knelt down with the rifle raised. "If only our George will put his ugly head round that statue just once, I'll blow it clean off his shoulders!"

"For God's sake!" Jimmy Wenderby gasped. "Are you crazy, Tiny? That's murder!"

OLD BILL AND BERT

By BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER

"So what?" Tiny demanded. "Will he send us love and kisses?"

Came another roar of gun-fire, and a bullet just missed us to smack against the wall. We all dived for cover a moment later, just as another volley crashed out like a sharp clap of thunder. There was the man Tiny had wounded rolling about on the floor, clasping an arm and bellowing for assistance. One of the party crept out of cover to drag his comrade to safety and I could not bring myself to shoot. I noticed, too, that Tiny did not see this little act of bravery, for his eyes were directed to the huge faceless statue behind which Thormanson was hiding. There was a determination and eagerness about him I did not like. I knew that Tiny meant to kill the object of his hatred, if he had the chance.

"Give it a rest, Tiny!" I implored. "Don't do anything you will have to answer for when we get back. Thormanson isn't worth it."

"I don't think you know how much of a blackguard he is, Sam. Aaneen read his mind and from what she made me understand, Thormanson's rotten to the core!"

"It's not your job to rub him out, whatever he may be," I argued.

"And he's a cousin of mine, after all," added Jimmy Wenderby. "For the sake of all concerned in this party, lower that rifle, Tiny."

The rifle was lowered when we all saw a head pushed slowly round the base of the statue, and such was the expression on George Thormanson's face at that moment that it startled everybody. His features were twisted—distorted in malignant hatred so that he was hardly recognisable. We beheld a fiend looking at us and instantly I saw a likeness to that face which once stared down at worshippers in this ancient temple—to that fearful countenance wiped flat in the long ago by the hand of Him who came to save Ooloom. The ancient Evil was free and rampant once again—free to work its will among men in the person of George Thormanson!

And what of the others with him who had entered that same hell beneath the glacier? I shuddered at the bare thoughts of what these men would now be capable of doing without a qualm.

Our very silence must have encouraged Thormanson to make another and more determined attempt upon our position. His distorted features disappeared from our view and we heard subdued voices discussing the situation. As for ourselves, I felt we were in a fairly safe position—as safe as any other in the place. To approach us the others must come within a direct line of fire from our shelter inside the passage. They must remain in the light, while we had the shadows to cover our actions. It looked good to me. While Thormanson was talking things over with his party, I voiced my thoughts to Jim and Tiny.

"You've made a sad mistake, Sam," Tiny said, wearily. "I could have settled Thormanson when the fool peeped round the statue. It's too late now. Surely you can see the obvious thing for him to do?"

Before he could explain Thormanson went into action. A terrific volley of rifle-fire sent us further down the passage for shelter, and we heard the thudding of their feet as they rushed forward to take our position. Had not Tiny Milton stood his ground in those few vital moments at the end of the passage we must have been forced to surrender. He stood coolly at the edge of the wall, resting his rifle there and taking deliberate aim at the enemy. A shrill scream of agony rose above all other sounds. Tiny fired again and again into the temple, and we heard them running away until all sounds ceased about us. Then Tiny lowered his rifle, and turned to us in the passage behind him.

"There's a dead man on the floor over by the statue," he said. "Was that murder—or self-defence? Have it which way you like, but I'm damned glad I've killed him!"

Without a word in reply, Jimmy and I cautiously left the shelter of the passage. Nothing moved within the temple. On the floor lay one of Thormanson's friends—and just beyond his outflung hand, a rifle.

"We'll move him later," I decided, hastily, and lifted the dead man's rifle from the floor. Tiny Milton had just managed to unbuckle the cartridge-belt when Thormanson renewed the attack from some distance away—a fact which, coupled with the uncertain light, probably saved our lives.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Bullets whined perilously close as we ran for cover towards the passage. I was leading the way, and had nearly reached our shelter when an Ooloomian giant stepped out of the passage in slow, majestic style. He completely blocked the way to safety, and we flung ourselves to the ground a moment before Thormanson's party opened fire again. I heard the smack-smack of bullets against the wall—and then a heavy crash as the giant fell backward in the narrow opening which meant safety for us all. A shout of triumph from the other end of the temple, and the enemy were rushing towards us in an effort to finish the fight.

Our position was hopeless! A dead giant blocked the passage completely and Jimmy Wenderby had to scramble over him to join us. Thormanson did not hesitate, even in face of Tiny Milton's levelled rifle.

"Put your hands up!" he roared.

I saw Tiny take deliberate aim, and his finger was tightening on the trigger when I knocked the barrel upward. George Thormanson saw my action, and came closer to take full advantage—just a shade too close. The rifle I had taken from the dead man swung upward and caught him a fearful clout over the head. He went down as though I'd shot him! That checked the rush of his two remaining companions, but only for the moment.

Without thought of failure and its consequences, I dropped the rifle to pounce upon Thormanson. It had flashed upon me that with George a prisoner the others would give up the struggle. But the next moment I had a full-sized fight on my hands with Reiner. We went down together, rolled over and over—fighting like madmen under the diamond cross. I heard Tiny's shout of encouragement and then I was struggling to break a stranglehold on my throat.

Time and again I smashed home short-arm punches on my opponent's face. But he could take it, and held on—squeezing, squeezing at my wind-pipe until my head threatened to burst. If I could only have wrenched myself free, landed just one weighty punch where no man can take it and come back. . . . A red mist was gathering before my eyes. Everything was blotted out.

When I opened my eyes again the barrel of Thormanson's rifle was directed full upon Tiny Milton, and as I turned my head the other way the great diamond cross was being lowered slowly to the ground by someone near the wall.

"Don't move!" a voice cautioned me, in steely tones.

I looked up to see the wounded man holding the Colt revolver I had borrowed from John Barley. The diamond cross rested on the ground, now, and the man who had lowered it stepped over me to examine the prize. I lifted my aching head for a moment, and failed to find Jimmy Wenderby. The fact that he was absent filled me with new hope.

"Come and tie these fools with that hide-rope," Thormanson said, and the man who had lowered the cross left it to carry out the order.

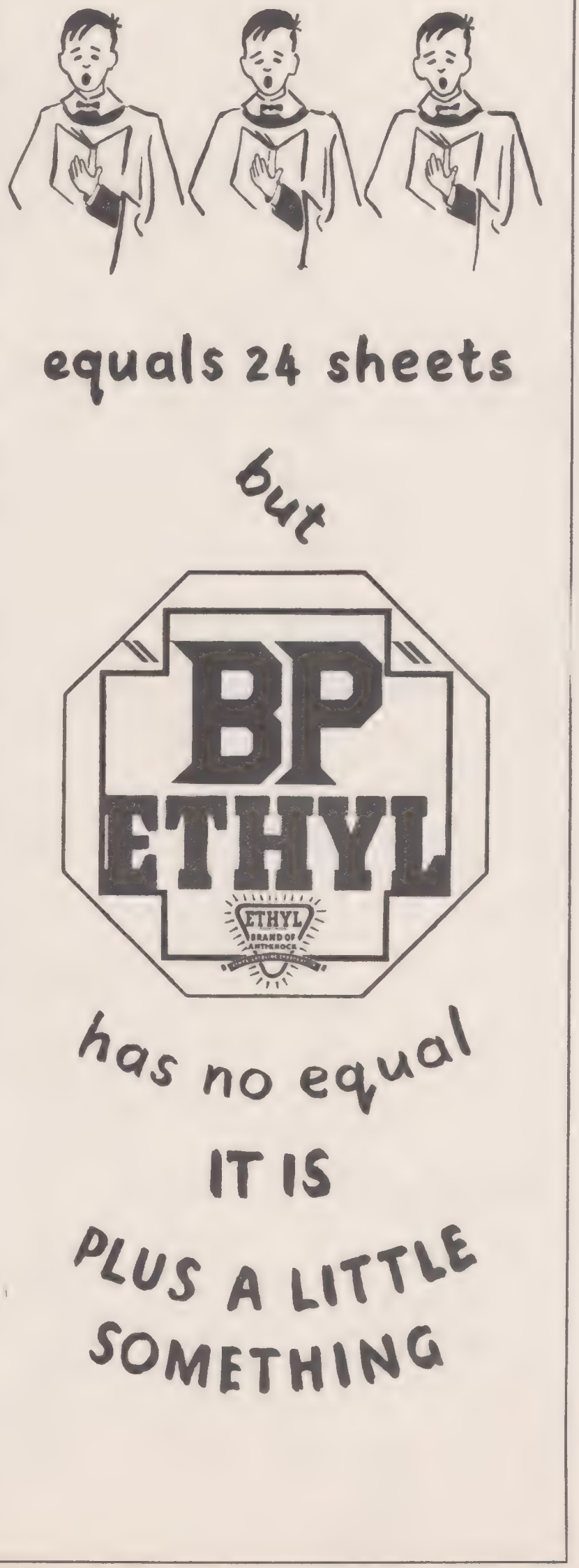
For a brief moment, Thormanson and Reiner were both bending low over Tiny Milton. A sudden roar of warning came from the man who guarded me, and his head was turned towards the passage. I had just a glimpse of a rifle-butt descending upon Reiner's head, and then realised my opportunity had come. My hands streaked out and grabbed the man's ankles. As he toppled I squirmed aside, rolled over, gained my feet just as my man was attempting to rise. Without hesitation I kicked him full in the stomach, flung myself upon his gun-hand and wrenched the weapon away. His weak condition, arising, I afterwards discovered, from a bullet-hole in the arm, made my task fairly easy.

And then—just as I turned to join in the fight over Tiny Milton, Thormanson fired a revolver at his own cousin. I stood aghast at the deliberate action—stupefied with horror. Jimmy Wenderby dropped without a cry. . . .

Before I could recover myself, Thormanson and his two companions were running for their very lives to reach the shadows at the other end of the temple.

NEXT WEEK:

The Last Stand



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BIG GAME GASKIN

continued from page 16

He was warm in his praise of the professor's culinary achievements.

"You certainly provide excellent fare, Bliss," he said, after one particularly elaborate spread.

"Yes," conceded Bliss, proudly. "It is usually woman's prerogative to provide for the inner man, while man provides for the outer woman, but I used to run a mess at one time during the war. Picked up lots of tricks; invented several dishes of my own; got quite a reputation."

Although his funds were still holding out, the professor made a point of devoting an hour or two daily to keeping up the sales of his Ant-Bane. He now prepared more impressive packets and, encouraged by his initial success, put up the price to one shilling.

Without saying anything to Colonel Gaskin, he borrowed a stuffed ant-eater from the collection and rigged it up in the dickey seat of the "Eighth Wonder," suitably adorned with posters announcing that Bliss Ant-Bane was "Better Than an Ant-eater!"

Before setting out on such missions he was careful to leave the colonel some congenial task such as brushing skins or polishing tusks or antlers. But one morning he carried in his portable printing press and offered another suggestion.

"Fascinating affair, this," he commented, when he had demonstrated its possibilities. "I carry it everywhere with me. Used it for keeping my catalogue up to date when I was curator of a small private museum once. *You* should have a printed catalogue, colonel. I'll teach you how to set up type and it'll be something to keep you amused."

The colonel was delighted with the prospect of having such a record of his treasures, and proved an apt pupil.

Meanwhile, Bliss busied himself downstairs, varying the task of overhauling the colonel's trophies with housework and cookery. He knew that the colonel was always happier left to himself and he did not obtrude, except at meal times, when he would bustle in breezily, bearing a tray of delicacies calculated to tempt the most jaded appetite.

The catalogue was completed at last, and the sight of it filled the colonel's heart with pride. He would sit turning the pages lovingly and, as he reviewed the various items, he lived his sporting adventures over again.

He was allowed up now but, on the professor's advice, still kept to his room.

"Things are in such a mess downstairs, at the moment," he was told. "But I'm getting some workmen in to help get everything straightened out and move the heavier pieces. Until the work is finished you'll be far more comfortable here."

"I wish I could lend a hand," said the colonel regretfully.

"Better take things easily for a little longer," counselled Bliss. "Mustn't overdo it yet, you know. But let's be cheerful. I don't think it would be expecting too much to get you downstairs in a day or two. Tell you what, I'll take you out for an airing in my car."

"That would be very pleasant," said the colonel.

"Ah, you haven't seen it yet!" responded Bliss. "It's not all one could wish for in the way of appearance, but I have a tender affection for it. It hasn't really been at its best since it was rammed broadside on by an Amazon in a sports car. Ever since that incident I have held to the general rule of giving every woman driver half the road—that is, if I am able to determine which half she happens to desire."

Most of his badinage was lost upon the colonel, but it served to turn the subject and make the old hunter forget his enforced incarceration for the time being.

At last the great day came when Bliss announced that the workmen had finished, and that the colonel could safely venture downstairs. There was an almost boyish exuberance about Bliss as he piloted Gaskin down into the hall and began a conducted tour of inspection. But if he was proud of his handiwork, his satisfaction was as nothing compared with the sheer delight of the old sportsman as he saw the transformation that had been wrought.

The place was unrecognisable. Instead of a confused medley of faded and musty trophies, tumbled together in disorder, everything had been arranged to show it off to the best possible advantage. Each article, too, bore a neatly printed descriptive label, and tears welled up into the colonel's eyes as he saw how finely his treasures had been displayed.

"It's wonderful!" he gasped huskily. "I can't tell you——"

"Don't try," cut in Bliss. "Do you know, colonel, you've got enough trophies here to run a private museum of your own. Not a sordid side-show; very select; open for limited period on certain days. In a popular little resort like this, holiday-makers would flock to it in their thousands."

The colonel chuckled. "You get the most whimsical ideas, my dear Bliss," he replied. "You almost make me wish it could come true."

"It has come true," was the professor's triumphant rejoinder. "Just step into the drive for a moment."

He led the colonel out through the front door and pointed with pride to a newly erected notice board standing at one side of the drive.

"Opening To-morrow!" announced conspicuous gold letters against a shining black background.

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The colonel's face was a study. There was moisture in his eyes, yet his features suddenly expanded in a friendly smile.

"You're the most amazing fellow, Bliss," he said huskily. "This is something I've often dreamed of doing, but I could never have done it by myself. How can I ever repay you?"

"Don't bother about that," murmured the professor. "If you care to let me stay on as honorary curator for a few weeks until you get things running smoothly, I shall be well content. Besides, it's the ants which really deserve all the credit."

"The ants?" was the perplexed rejoinder.

"Yes," answered Bliss. "Come for that long-promised drive in 'The Eighth Wonder' and I'll explain."

CHALLENGE TO THE INEVITABLE

continued from page 8

substitute for Marquis of Queensberry rules. He side-stepped, and came in low with a twisting foul blow six inches below the buckle of the man's belt. One good foul, thought Larry fleetingly, deserves another.

In a second, perhaps, he had reduced the odds to two to one. That much his surprise attack had done for him. But now both the other men were on him; and Larry was backing up.

A fist battered his head just over the ear, and Larry staggered in the snow. He felt numb all over; for an instant he thought he was going down. Then he managed a straight arm into the face of one of the pair, which sent him reeling back; not hurt, but thrown off balance momentarily.

Dodging under the flailing arms of the other man, Larry thrust his right leg behind the heels of his opponent, and pushed violently with both hands. Tripped by Larry's leg, the man fell straight back, his back crashing against a sharp ledge of granite swept bare by the wind.

Larry was shouting now. What the words were he did not know; there was a sort of lust in him—the atavistic lust of a man fighting for a righteous cause; fighting valiantly, toe to toe, with his bare hands. Fighting, and seeing his enemies go down before him.

The fourth man was approaching . . . warily. . . . He was waiting for his companions to get on their feet again, and Larry knew that his only hope was to keep this very thing from happening. For those two or three seconds, he had taken care of his four opponents, but he knew he could not hope to keep that up for long. He came in swiftly, leaned aside to avoid a hurtling fist.

Half numb as he still was, he was slow, and the blow grazed his shoulder. Throwing everything he had into the effort, Larry came in close with a left and a right which snapped the man's head and took the strength from his legs. Abruptly, he sagged forward—and Larry didn't get away in time.

He went down, under the limp twitching body of the fourth man.

Two of the other men were up now, Larry saw, as he tried desperately to work his body clear. The man who had fallen across the ledge had snatched up a frost-riven fragment of granite and was running toward Larry, the murderous rock held high in his hands.

This, thought Larry, is it. There was death in the man's jerking face, in the maniacal twist of his mouth. There was no mistaking. . . .

Then Petra screamed and threw herself on the man who had murder in his face, pounding him with amazingly capable fists. The stone dropped from his hands; under the pitiless lash of Petra's tongue, he and the others moved away, muttering, abashed, and not fully understanding. Larry tried to stand up, but his head was whirling so that he sat down again, very solidly, very unexpectedly.

He touched the side of his face and his hand came away bloody. He recalled, then, that his head had struck something, when he fell, and he could see what that something was; the corner of an outcropping rock.

Petra dropped beside him with a little cry that was almost like a sob of pain.

"Larry, dear! Oh, they've hurt you so! Let me bind up your poor head——"

A booming voice came surprisingly from the plane:

"He's all right, Petra. Don't worry." Thorkil Nielsen leaped from the ship and strode toward them, smiling grimly. "A man who can fight like that has plenty of salt in his blood. His wounds will heal of themselves."

"You were in the ship?" Larry asked.

"Yes." Nielsen was still smiling. "While you were in the tent, I stowed away. There were things to hide under."

Larry nodded. He found, to his surprise, that he was holding Petra's hand—or was she holding his? Anyway, it was very strange and very pleasant.

"This lodge of yours," said Thorkil Nielsen, looking beyond the horizon, and speaking carelessly, as though his words were unimportant, "shall we call it Assin-Nebah Lodge, after my country?"

"What?" asked Larry, sharply. "What's that?"

He turned to face the older man, and somehow it seemed quite natural, when he did so, that his arm should slip around Petra's shoulders.

"I like men who can fight," Nielsen said. "It has been years—a good many years—since I have seen a fight like that. It was good—but it made me realise I am old. Very old, Larry Bowden. I want men like you at my back, fighting with me, not against me. I would have liked a son like you, a son . . ." He turned away again, a look in his eyes as though he saw beyond the farthest horizon. "You will make a good son-in-law, I think."

Larry glanced at Petra. She was flushed and there was confusion in her eyes, but she did not avoid Larry's gaze.

'Will I?" asked Larry.

Petra's hand pressed Larry's, gently.

"My father," she said softly, "is a very wise man. How . . . how do you feel, Larry?"

"Better," said Larry. He thought about the matter, and nodded. "Decidedly better!" And he kissed the daughter of Thorkil Nielsen.

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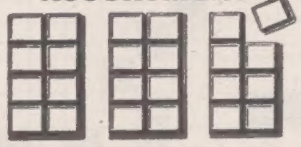

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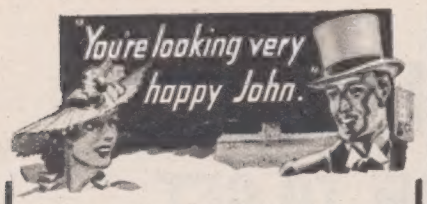

"By Jove, yes, Mary, I've solved the shaving problem. My fellow Dacre used to daub my face every a.m. and p.m. with some filthy smelling stuff he called lather—hurt like the deuce—used to fear him almost as much as my dentist. Some Johnnie at the Club murmured Razvite, I 'clutched at the straw,' and found it literally a life-belt. Now, with Razvite, Dacre runs over my face in two minutes instead of ten, and by Jove, my face feels like a two-year-old. Nothing but Razvite for me in future."

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PHILIP EMANUEL, Advertisement Director
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NEXT WEEK

GAZE on the picture below and see if you can identify the subject thereof in three guesses. To help you out, we will tell you that it is someone whose picture has appeared many times in our pages.

You're right (or were you wrong?) it is Francis Foster, as he appeared in 1925, before he grew that magnificent beard featured so prominently in the photograph a little lower down the page.

Now the author of "Longshanks" has written the story of his own colourful life, and the publication of extracts from this important work will commence in next week's issue of THE PASSING SHOW. Francis Foster has been in turn professional soldier, journalist, author and priest, and the story of his varied life is packed with many surprising adventures and associations with strong characters.

Some of his most remarkable experiences took place during the period of his life when he was soldiering in India, for it was during that time that fate brought him into contact with a mystic whose influence on his spiritual life cannot be over-estimated.

Next week you will read of the mysterious Ananda, whose uncanny powers changed the whole course of the author's life, and a later episode tells of Foster's first meeting with Longshanks and the beginnings of a great friendship.

Francis Foster is now at work on a new series of short stories dealing with that intensely human and altogether lovable character, Longshanks, publication of which will commence in the early autumn.

ALSO in next week's issue: an unusual story by James Francis Dwyer, a new "Uncle" episode by Michael Kent, a country chronicle by S. L. Bensusan, in which a not so simple son of toil sees to it that the gathering in of the harvest is celebrated in a manner that meets with his entire approval and additional stories by Richard Colwell and Leslie Beresford.

YOU'RE TELLING US

EVER since our youthful intellect was first stunned by the revelation that gooseberry bushes have no bearing on the birth rate, we have walked warily through this vale of tears waiting for someone to appear round the next corner and shatter another illusion. And we have never had to wait long, for if there is one thing at which our fellow men are really proficient it is the knack of tearing the veil of phantasy from the face of reality.

One by one our simple beliefs have been destroyed until we imagined that we were reduced to a state of hard-boiled cynicism that was completely shockproof. Now along comes yet another ruthless illusion-shatterer to prove us wrong. And having read the letter from Mr. George Gascoigne of Hay Mills, Birmingham, we want to do nothing so much as wallow in a sea of Barriesque whimsy along with Tinkerbell, Mary Rose, Old Uncle Maconachie and all until we have forgotten that life is but a snare and a delusion.

Like all right-minded readers of thrillers and regular patrons of the far from silent screen, we have learnt to look upon the Chinese as a crafty race, in the unfathomable depths of whose almond eyes gleams all the cunning of the east. The soft padding of their slippered feet, the enigma of their glances, to say nothing of the way they either purr like a leopard or hiss like an uppish soda water syphon make them the villains par excellence. We would as soon have visualised a successful actor-manager talking in a whisper in the smoking-room of the Garrick Club as a Chinaman shouting in wild excitement.

And now Mr. Gascoigne tells us we must rub it all out and draw it again, for he will have none of that slinky stuff that has made thrillers what they are to-day.

"It is about time," he says, reprovingly, "that the legend of the silent, slinking, cunning Chinese was blown to bits. Nobody who has lived in China—especially Shanghai—will accept it. Honest John Chinaman is a noisy person; perhaps the noisiest in the world. When I lived in Shanghai, I was awakened by brass bands, complete with big drum, engaged by shopkeepers to attract customers. Carrier coolies are forever chanting monotonously and whether the road be congested or clear, taxi and truck drivers never give their klaxons a rest.

"Persons," he continues, rubbing salt into the wound, "carry on ordinary conversations from across the road at a shout, while weddings, festivals and even funerals are excuses for bands and fireworks. Tell me that the German is forever followed by a dachshund; that all Frenchmen have pointed beards and eat snails; that Italians wear earrings and grind organs, and I'll swallow it all before believing that John Chinaman is silent and sneaky. Why, he couldn't live without noise and his very noisiness proclaims his honesty."

Well, all we can say is that Mr. Gascoigne's Chinamen simply don't know what is expected of them. And what is more, such conduct would never be tolerated in Hollywood, so let them put that in their pipe and smoke it!

And while Mr. Gascoigne is busy upholding the noisiness of the Chinese, Mr. S. H. Dawe of Kingston-on-Thames is equally busy attacking the "dumbness" of his fellow Englishman.

"I cannot understand," he bemoans, "why people bathe at danger points and descend or climb steep cliffs in spite of notices imploring them not to do so. It is one of life's mysteries. Last summer I saw a man disrobing under a notice stating that the spot was dangerous even to swimmers, but he only laughed when I pointed this out to him. However, before he was ready to plunge in, a large log came swimming by and being caught in an eddy was hurled and twisted about for some minutes. The man returned to

his clothes, dressed and went away wiser than he had been.

"On another occasion, I saw a man making ready to descend the cliff at Trevose Head. I warned him of the danger, but he laughed and said it looked easy. I agreed, but pointed out that he had to return and the ascent was quite another thing. He laughed again and started his climb while I got a rope from the lighthouse and waited. . . . It took two of us two hours to pull him up.

"Daily, during the summer, the papers give accounts of these senseless people seeking death. Is there any explanation for their actions?"

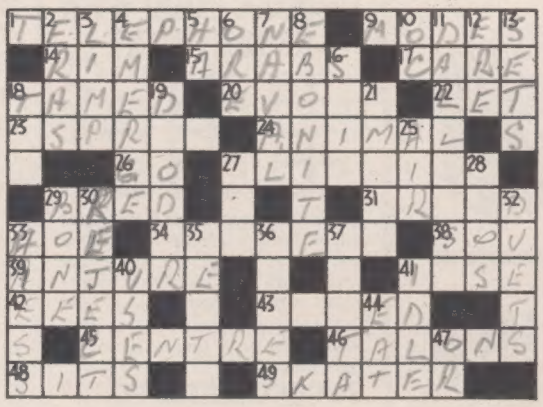
None that we know of, unless they are in the habit of crossing the road at points other than pedestrian crossings and think if they can get away with that, they must have charmed lives. But there's probably more to it than that, though what the heck it is, we don't know.

And now here comes "Bachelor" (he *would* be!) of Birmingham to protest against the excessive amount of knitting women go in for nowadays. "It must be a terrible strain both mental and physical and very bad for their looks, giving them a preternaturally strained appearance."

Uncle Joe, whose opinion is always worth—well, whose opinion is at least given free, begged to differ. Discreetly lowering his voice as he glanced towards the kitchen, here placed the screw stopper in his medicine bottle and then delivered himself of this great thought: "Knitting is an excellent thing for women. It gives them something to think about when they are talking!"

YOU'RE TELLING US! Half a guinea is paid for each letter or quotation printed on this page. Address: "Readers' Letters," "Passing Show," 93 Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Please state whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss.

For Your Amusement

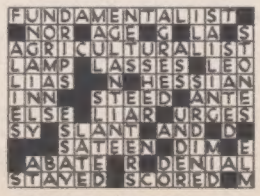


CLUES ACROSS

1. Means of communication.
9. Rule of fashion.
14. Margin.
15. May be horses or men.
17. Remove weakness found in 33 down.
18. Subdued.
20. Bring forth.
22. Permit.
23. A bird.
24. Definitely not of vegetable world.
26. Depart.
27. In position of unstable equilibrium.
29. Reared.
31. Put foot down, perhaps firmly.
33. Horticultural implement.
34. Preceded chemistry.
38. This is not worth much.
39. To cause harm.
41. Geographical feature.
42. Dregs.
43. Irritated.
45. This is equidistant from surroundings.
46. No salt for weapons.
48. Takes chair.
49. He goes on ice.

CLUES DOWN

2. Periods.
3. Spineless.
4. Come forth.
5. Exclamation from 36 down.
6. Mineral source.
7. Pertaining to the fleet.
8. One bite will suffice for this.
10. Army boss (abbreviation).
11. Lacking brilliance
12. Previous.
13. Arranges.
16. Bound lightly or omit.
18. One of 33 down in Devon.
19. Dare do (anagram).
21. Nothing in something.
25. We can't live without it.
27. A small bag.
28. Places of confinement.
29. Hard substance in 8 down
30. Refuse or renounce.
32. Two required for these.
33. High places.
35. Neighbour of Edinburgh.
36. Swift creatures.
37. Mediterranean island.
40. Employs.
41. Not at work.
44. Consume.
47. Part of 6 down.



Solution to last week's puzzle

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In the most unexpected places

Illustrated above—Norton, a hamlet near Shrewsbury. "Player's" can be purchased at this picturesque cottage which is reputed to be 300 years old. Nearby are the ruins of the old Roman City Uriconium.

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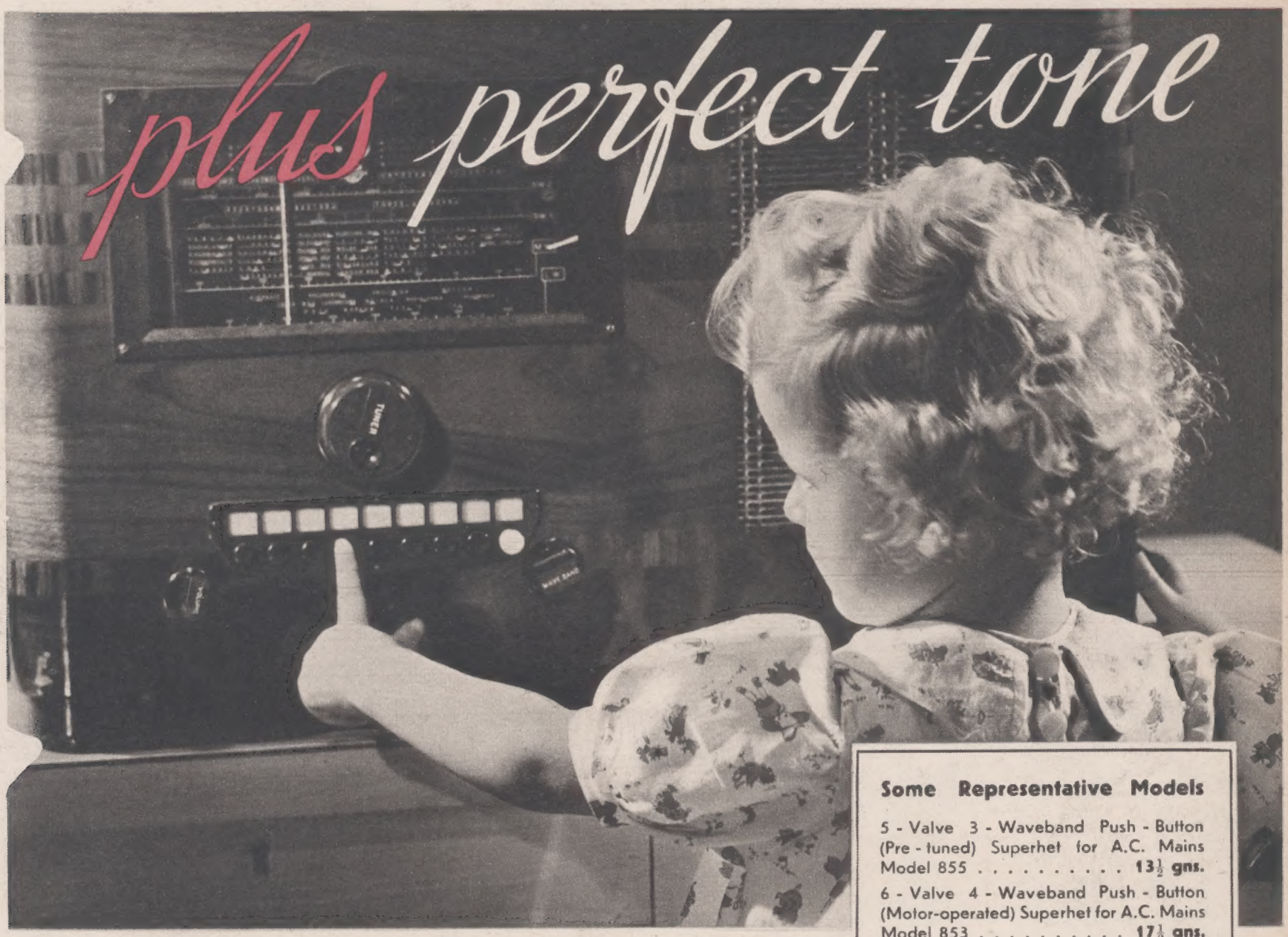

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